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ABSTRACT

This curriculum guide is intended to introduce elementary school students to Greek mythology. The authors suggest that the selections be presented by the teacher as lively and imaginative stories; the more abstract aspects of the myths should be largely ignored until students reach the junior high school level. In addition to the myths themselves, the guide also includes suggested teaching activities, questions for class discussion, and numerous illustrations. (See related documents CS 200 500, CS 200 502-CS 200 508.) (DI)

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Literature Curriculum, Levels C - D

GREEK MYTHOLOGY

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GREEK MYTHOLOGY

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GREEK MYTHOLOGY - INTRODUCTION

Myths are highly imaginative stories. At the same time they are explanations of conditions and forces in the universe. In other words, they are both concrete stories and abstract ideas, or concrete ways of explaining abstract ideas. Each god and goddess has a distinct and concrete personality, but each also symbolizes some force in the universe (whether inside or outside man's mind) which man is powerless to control.

You will probably want to present the following selection of Greek myths as lively, imaginative stories only. The more abstract aspects can be lightly touched upon but should be largely ignored until students reach the junior high school level.

Plainly enough the gods and goddesses of the Greeks are very human. They have their faults, their quarrels, their changes of mood, just as we do. But they also have power--power to change shape, to change the seasons at will, to restore life to a person who has died, even to destroy the world. Because of their foibles, the Greek gods and goddesses use their powers unwisely at times and cause mankind many a misfortune (as well as giving the early Greeks explanations for the many mystifying forces in their world).

Myths differ from folk and fairy tales as religion differs from ethics. Myths deal with man's place in the universe; folktales with a man's place in his particular culture. Myths give us an understanding of a culture's ways of understanding the universe and human nature. Unlike fables, from which meanings can be easily extracted, myths and their meanings are so closely interwoven that the two elements--myth and meaning--become inseparable.

No myth is attributable to only one person. Each one evolved gradually over the centuries, being orally transmitted from person to person. When they recorded the Greek myths, the ancient writers Homer and Hesiod may have believed in them, or they may have considered them, as we do, very lively stories, full of insights into human nature.

HOW EVERYTHING BEGAN: Part 1

VOCABULARY

Uranus (yu̇ rā´ nəs) - the Sky God, the first god

Cyclopes (singular Cyclops - sī´ claps) - huge giants having single eyes

Tartarus (tär´ tə rəs) - a place far away in the dark Underworld

Titans (tī´ tə nz) - giant children of Uranus and Mother Earth

Cronus (krō´ nəs) - the most powerful Titan

sickle - a curved blade with a handle, usually used for cutting down plants

READ THE SELECTION

Read the first part of the story, stopping after "but he was sorry later that he did." Then ask students to recall the names of the Sky God (Uranus), the earth (Mother Earth), the second three children (Cyclopes), where they were sent (Tartarus), and the last group of children (Titans). Ask your students why they think Uranus might have been sorry he let the Titan giants loose. Discuss possibilities. Next ask how they think Mother Earth might have felt when Uranus imprisoned her first three children and flung the next three down into Tartarus. Discuss possibilities.

Tell your students that in the next paragraph of the story they will find out why Uranus was sorry he let the Titans loose and how Mother Earth felt.

Read the next paragraph and stop. That is the end of part one.

QUESTIONS

1. How do you feel about what Uranus did with his children? (Discuss.)

2. How do you feel about what Mother Earth had done to Uranus? (Discuss.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Give each student either a large sheet of blue and small sheets of white and yellow construction paper, or a large sheet of green and small sheets of brown and gray and blue construction paper, depending

upon whether they choose to make the face of the Sky God Uranus or the face of Mother Earth. Give each student scissors and glue. Suggest that they use the blue or green as the head and the white (clouds) and yellow (stars) or brown (soil) and gray (stones) and blue (water) to make the facial features. For example, Uranus' eyes and nose and ears might be yellow stars, his mouth and hair white clouds.

Once a student is finished, ask him to print either "Sky God Uranus" or "Mother Earth" across the forehead of his cut-out with magic marker.

2. Try to imagine a hundred-handed monster. What would he look like? What things might he do? Draw a picture of the way you think he would look and write a story about him.

HOW EVERYTHING BEGAN: Part 2

(Begins with "Cronus, the leader of the attack, became the new master of the universe.")

Ask your students to think back to the last lesson and recount what happened. Tell them that before he was killed, Uranus had been the ruler of the universe. Ask them who they think took over as ruler after Uranus had been killed. Discuss why each suggestion is a likely or unlikely candidate for ruler.

Tell your students to listen to today's story to find out who became master. Also tell them that today's story is a lot like the last story. Ask them to listen for likenesses.

VOCABULARY

Atlas - the Titan who led the battle against Zeus

nymphs - beautiful maidens who lived in streams or fields or forests

READ THE SELECTION

Continue reading the story, ending with "and hold the crushing weight of the heavens on his shoulders."

QUESTIONS

1. Who became master of the universe after Uranus was killed? (Cronus.) Why does it make sense that he would become the new ruler? (He was leader of the revolt.)

2. What warning did Cronus receive from the dying Uranus? (That his own son would destroy him and become the new ruler.)

3. How is this story similar to the last story we read? (A father was killed by his sons; a son became the new ruler; each mother became angry at her husband for mistreating her children; each mother got revenge by helping her sons destroy her husband.)

4. Why do you think Zeus and his brothers won the great battle? (Discuss. Perhaps because of Mother Earth's advice to free the monsters and Cyclopes; or because of the weapons the Cyclopes made; or because of Uranus' warning. There may be other ideas.)

5. What creatures were in Tartarus before the great battle? (Cyclopes.) Who was there after the battle? (Titans.) Who guarded them? (The hundred-handed monsters.)

ACTIVITY

1. Ask your students to close their eyes and imagine what the great battle was like. Then hand out large pieces of paper and crayons and ask students to draw a part of that battle. When each student finishes, ask him to tell you some words that describe the sounds of the battle. Write them in magic marker on the bottom of his picture. Display the battle scenes on available wall space.

HOW EVERYTHING BEGAN: Part 3

(Begins with "Zeus and his brothers met together to divide up the universe.")

This section of the creation story is nothing more than a catalogue of the gods and goddesses who live on Mt. Olympus. In order to familiarize your students with the deities, their names and their duties, and in order to make this section interesting, cut apart the "Gods and Goddesses Review Game" (an extra copy of which is included in this teacher's section) into paragraphs. Make sure the two paragraphs about Apollo are kept in one piece, however. Hand out the paragraphs to pairs of students, or single students. You may want to pair a bright or capable student with a less capable one, to insure that the lesson goes well. Ask each pair to read over their paragraph and to picture their deity in their minds. Then supply each pair with a 12" by 16" piece of tagboard, scissors, and crayons. Ask them to use the information in their paragraphs to make a stick puppet of their deity.

(You may want to ask a few of your less capable students to tip a desk on its side and decorate the front of it with crepe paper for a puppet theater.)

As the students work, check to see that they know what the words in their paragraphs mean, and that they include the information in their paragraphs in their puppet-drawing. Encourage them to use their imaginations on missing details. You may want to refer them to the illustrations in their books, unless you think this will decrease their confidence in their own drawing ability.

When the puppets are done and have been taped to a pencil or other stick, ask students to use the puppet theater to introduce their deity to the class. Ask them to tell the name, duties, and any other interesting information about their puppet. Perhaps one student could move the puppet while the other student speaks for it.

For example; "My name is Zeus. I am the ruler of all living creatures. I have a palace at the top of Mount Olympus, far above the clouds, where I live."

After each deity is introduced, pin him or her up on a bulletin board labeled "The Gods and Goddesses of the Greek Myths," with a big sign telling the name and function of each.

Zeus (zūs) - King of all gods

Poseidon (pō sī´dən) - God of Oceans

Hades (hā´dəz) - God of the Dead

Hera - Queen of all gods

Apollo - God of the Sun

Artemis (ar´ tə mis) - Goddess of the Moon, Hunting, Wild Animals

Athena - Goddess of Wisdom

Hephaestus (he fēs´ təs) - Builder of the gods

Aphrodite or Venus (af rō dī´ tē) - Goddess of Love and Beauty

Hermes - Messenger of the gods

Ares - God of War

Hestia - Goddess of the Home

Demeter - Goddess of Plants

Eros or Cupid - God of Love

Prometheus - Helper of Mankind

VOCABULARY

Instead of presenting hard words to the entire class, ask students to make a list of hard words in their paragraphs and bring them up so you can help them individually.

READ THE SELECTION

This will be done by each pair of students individually. You may want to read the entire selection to them before handing out the parts (gods to boys; goddesses to girls if possible.)

QUESTIONS

1. After each god and goddess has been presented and put up on the board, you might ask students, if they seem interested, such rudimentary questions as how to pronounce the names, what the jobs are, which deity they like best and why, which they like least and why.

ACTIVITY

Read or ask students to read the paragraph telling about Hermes, beginning "Hermes, another child of Zeus, . . ." Ask students to imagine how day-old Hermes managed to steal Apollo's herd of sheep, how Zeus heard about it, and how Zeus discovered Hermes had done it. Have them write a short story or myth of their own. Since only the bare suggestion of the episode is given, students will be able to let their imaginations fill in the details.

GODS AND GODDESSES REVIEW GAME

Tell your students you will pretend you are a certain god or goddess. If they can correctly guess who you are pretending to be, they can remove the appropriate puppet from the board to keep at their desk during the game.

(Try to make sure a student gets no more than one puppet, if possible.)

Riddles:

1. I drive my fiery chariot across the sky every day, and this brings daylight to the world. From my lips fall only true words, never false ones. It is I who play beautiful music for the gods on my golden lyre. Who am I? (Apollo.)

2. I am a beautiful goddess born from the foam of the sea. My radiant smile fills the earth with joy and flowers. Zeus gave me to Hephaestus for his wife. Who might I be? (Aphrodite.)

3. I commanded the gigantic Cyclopes to build me a wondrous palace at the top of Mount Olympus far above the clouds. There I live and rule all living creatures--gods, men, and beasts. My name is _____. (Zeus.)

4. I am the sister of great Zeus. I rule over all plants and the harvest too. I am called _____. (Demeter.)

5. I am a gloomy god but I am very rich, for I own all the precious metals hidden in the earth. I also own a magic helmet that makes anyone who wears it invisible. I am not welcome on Mount Olympus, for I have no softness in my heart. Of course my name is _____. (Hades.)

6. I am a queen. It is my duty to watch over married women everywhere. They say I have a bad temper, and my husband would be the first to agree. Who am I? (Hera.)

7. I am the ugliest of all the gods on Mt. Olympus. My mother Hera was so angry when she saw how ugly I was that she flung me down from Olympus. The fall made me lame. But I forgive her for that. I am clever at making things out of metal. I have made all the palaces, furniture, armor, and weapons for the gods with the help of my golden handmaidens which I also made. I am known as _____. (Hephaestus.)

8. I have a splendid palace beneath the sea. I can command the oceans to make great storms and floods. And I can cause earthquakes. I carry my trident with me wherever I go. My name is _____. (Poseidon.)

9. I am Apollo's twin sister. Like Apollo, I am skillful with my silver bow and arrows. I rule over wild animals, among other things. I am called _____. (Artemis.)

10. (loudly) I love blood and violence. The Greeks don't like me; neither do my father and mother, Zeus and Hera. They think I am a coward, but I'm not. Ouch! My vulture just pecked my finger. Ow! Ow! Ow! Oh--yes--I was introducing myself to you. Who do you think I am? (Ares.)

11. I am a goddess who has no mother. You see, I sprang full grown from the head of my father, Zeus. Zeus favors me above all his other children. I weave beautiful things and I take care of city life. The most famous city in Greece was named after me. Who am I? (Athena.)

12. I have wings on my sandals, on my hat, and on my magic wand. These wings help me to zoom from place to place. When I was only one day old I stole Apollo's herd of sheep, but my father Zeus made me give them back. Do you know who I am? (Hermes.)

13. I am the son of Aphrodite. I have tiny arrows filled with the poison of love. If my arrows strike mortals like you, you fall madly in love with the next person you see. Watch out! I'm aiming at you! Who am I? (Eros, or Cupid.)

14. At every meal the Greek people pray to me. I am the sister of Zeus. My name is _____. (Hestia.)

15. I am only half god, but since I fought on the side of Zeus in the great war against Cronus, Zeus did not lock me up in Tartarus along with my brothers the Titans. I angered Zeus greatly by giving fire to man. I am _____. (Prometheus.)

ACTIVITY

After the puppets have been put back up on the bulletin board, ask each student to choose a god or goddess to write a short adventure about. They might choose to write about Eros shooting a love arrow at someone, or Ares fighting a battle or Poseidon under the sea. Give each student a sheet of lined paper and when a student asks you how to spell a word, print it on the board.

When students have finished their stories, ask them to draw pictures to illustrate their tales. Compile the stories and pictures into a book entitled "Our Adventures of Greek Gods and Goddesses." At some later time, show a few of the pictures and read a few of the stories to the class.

If your students seem interested in the gods and goddesses, you might want to limit this class book to one god or goddess. Each day that you decide to study a different god or goddess, your students would write a story about just that deity. Then your class would have 16 books. On the cover of each book you could paste the puppet representing that god after the Greek mythology unit was finished.

GODS AND GODDESSES REVIEW GAME

Tell your students you will pretend you are a certain god or goddess. If they can correctly guess who you are pretending to be, they can remove the appropriate puppet from the board to keep at their desk during the game.

(Try to make sure a student gets no more than one puppet, if possible.)

Riddles:

1. I drive my fiery chariot across the sky every day, and this brings daylight to the world. From my lips fall only true words, never false ones. It is I who play beautiful music for the gods on my golden lyre. Who am I? _____

2. I am a beautiful goddess born from the foam of the sea. My radiant smile fills the earth with joy and flowers. Zeus gave me to Hephaestus for his wife. Who might I be? _____

3. I commanded the gigantic Cyclopes to build me a wondrous palace at the top of Mount Olympus far above the clouds. There I live and rule all living creatures--gods, men, and beasts. My name is _____.

4. I am the sister of great Zeus. I rule over all plants and the harvest too. I am called _____.

5. I am a gloomy god but I am very rich, for I own all the precious metals hidden in the earth. I also own a magic helmet that makes anyone who wears it invisible. I am not welcome on Mount Olympus, for I have no softness in my heart. Of course my name is _____.

6. I am a queen. It is my duty to watch over married women everywhere. They say I have a bad temper, and my husband would be the first to agree. Who am I? _____

7. I am the ugliest of all the gods on Mt. Olympus. My mother Hera was so angry when she saw how ugly I was that she flung me down from Olympus. The fall made me lame. But I forgive her for that. I am clever at making things out of metal. I have made all the palaces, furniture, armor, and weapons for the gods with the help of my gol den handmaidens which I also made. I am known as _____.

8. I have a splendid palace beneath the sea. I can command the oceans to make great storms and floods. And I can cause earthquakes. I carry my trident with me wherever I go. My name is _____.

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12. I have wings on my sandals, on my hat, and on my magic wand. These wings help me to zoom from place to place. When I was only one day old I stole Apollo's herd of sheep, but my father Zeus made me give them back. Do you know who I am? _____

13. I am the son of Aphrodite. I have tiny arrows filled with the poison of love. If my arrows strike mortals like you, you fall madly in love with the next person you see. Watch out! I'm aiming at you! Who am I? _____

14. At every meal the Greek people pray to me. I am the sister of Zeus. My name is _____.

15. I am only half god, but since I fought on the side of Zeus in the great war against Cronus, Zeus did not lock me up in Tartarus along with my brothers the Titans. I angered Zeus greatly by giving fire to man. I am _____.

HOW EVERYTHING BEGAN

In the beginning there was darkness, wild and whirling and endless. After a long, long time, in this cold and silent waste, Earth appeared, and then the Sky. Mother Earth was the first goddess, and the Sky, called Uranus by the Greeks, was the first of the Greek gods. After another long time, the Earth and the Sky had children. But the children were strange ones indeed. They were monsters, as strong as earthquakes. The first three each had a hundred hands and fifty terrible heads. The Sky, their father, hated the sight of these three of his children, and he imprisoned the ugly creatures deep underground.

The next three children were as tall and strong as mountains. Each had a single glaring eye in the middle of its forehead. Each eye was as round and large as a wagon wheel. These monsters were called Cyclopes, which means Wheel-eyed Ones. Their father, the Sky, was again filled with disgust when he saw his second three children. He flung them into Tartarus, a gloomy place far away in the dark Underworld.

The last group of children born to the Earth and the Sky were the Titans. They were of giant size like the others, but they were not monsters. They looked like enormous men, as big as hills. Their father allowed the Titans to roam the earth freely, but he was sorry later that he did.

Mother Earth was furious with her husband, the Sky, for hiding her children. She urged her other children, the Titans, to help her get revenge on their Father. Led by Cronus, whom Mother Earth had armed with a flint sickle, the Titans came upon their father asleep and wounded him horribly, so that he died.

Cronus, the leader of the attack, became the new master of the universe. He took for his queen his sister Rhea.

Cronus was deeply worried because his father, before he died, had warned that one day Cronus's own son would destroy Cronus and take over as ruler. Cronus wanted to make sure this did not happen, so every time that his queen bore him a child, he swallowed it. He did this with his first five children: three goddesses named Hestia, Demeter, and Hera, and two gods named Hades and Poseidon.

Queen Rhea was furious with Cronus for swallowing her children. So she bore her last child in secret, and had him carried off to the island of Crete where he was tenderly cared for by three kind nymphs. (Nymphs were beautiful maidens who lived in streams or fields or forests.)

Meanwhile, sly Rhea handed over to Cronus a stone wrapped in baby clothes. Thinking the stone was his child, Cronus swallowed it.

When Zeus, as the baby was called, had grown up he left Crete and visited his faithful mother Rhea. He asked if she would make him cup-bearer to his father, King Cronus. Rhea was still eager for revenge. She eagerly supplied Zeus with salt and mustard which Zeus mixed in the king's honeyed drink. As soon as Cronus drank the salt and mustard mixture, he became very sick and vomited up the stone and all five of Zeus's brothers and sisters.

The freed brothers and sisters, Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, and Poseidon, were unhurt and quickly escaped from Cronus. They were grateful to Zeus and asked him to be their leader in a war against Cronus and the other Titans.

The terrible war between the young gods and the Titans lasted ten long and bloody years. It almost destroyed the entire universe. The heavens groaned and the great seas heaved as the gods rushed at one another.

After a time, Mother Earth realized that Zeus and his brothers and sisters needed help. She advised them to free the hundred-handed monsters and the one-eyed Cyclopes from their prisons deep underground. The young gods followed her advice. In return for their freedom the Cyclopes made mighty thunderbolts and gave them to Zeus to use as weapons.

They gave Hades a helmet of darkness to make him invisible. To Poseidon they gave a great three-pointed spear called a trident. The Cyclopes themselves used t hunder and earthquakes as their weapons, and each of the hundred-handed monsters armed himself with huge rocks.

Together the three brothers, Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon, quietly came up to where Cronus was and surprised him. While Poseidon held his attention by threatening to stab him with the trident, Zeus came up behind Cronus and struck him down with a thunderbolt. The hundred-handed monsters hurled their rocks at the remaining Titans, who fled.

After the great war Zeus banished all the defeated Titans to the depths of Tartarus, where they were guarded by the hundred-handed monsters. But because Atlas had been the leader of the Titans he was given a worse punishment. He had to stand forever on top of a great

mountain and hold the crushing weight of the heavens on his shoulders.

Zeus and his brothers met together to divide up the universe. Zeus became the ruler of all living creatures--gods, men, and beasts. He commanded the gigantic Cyclopes to build him a wondrous palace at the top of lofty Mt. Olympus far above the clouds. There Zeus lived, surrounded by many other powerful gods and lovely goddesses.

Poseidon wanted to rule the oceans. He had a splendid palace built beneath the sea, but he spent a lot of his time with Zeus on Mt. Olympus. Poseidon, who always carried his trident with him, could command the oceans and make great storms and floods, and he could also cause terrible earthquakes.

Hades, a gloomy god, chose to be ruler of the Underworld or Kingdom of the Dead. He became very rich, for he owned all the precious metals hidden in the earth. He also owned a magic helmet which made anyone who wore it invisible. Hades was not welcome on Mt. Olympus, for he was glum and had no softness in his heart.

Zeus chose his sister Hera to be his wife and queen. She was beautiful indeed. It was her duty to watch over married women everywhere. But Hera was very proud and haughty and had a very bad temper, as you shall see later on.

Also living on Mt. Olympus was Apollo, son of Zeus. He was the God of the Sun, and the Greeks believed that every day Apollo crossed the sky from east to west

in a fiery chariot drawn by steeds of flame, bringing daylight to the world.

From the lips of Apollo fell only true words, never false ones, for he was also the God of Truth. It was Apollo who played beautiful music for the gods on his golden lyre. He was a great archer and killed a frightful serpent called Python with his golden bow and well-shot arrows. He also taught men the art of healing.

Apollo had a twin sister, Artemis, goddess of the Moon. Like Apollo, Artemis was skillful with her silver bow and arrows. She was goddess of hunting, but at the same time she was goddess of wild animals.

Athena, a goddess who had no mother, sprang full grown from the head of her father, Zeus. She was Zeus's favorite child. Athena was goddess of Wisdom and of household skills such as weaving. She was also the protector of city life. Athens, the most famous Greek city, was named after her. A temple was built to honor her there. Parts of it still stand today. It is called the Parthenon.

To get even with Zeus for bearing Athena alone, Hera bore the god Hephaestus by herself. But when Hera saw that he was ugly and not beautiful like the other gods, she became enraged and flung the baby down from Olympus. When he fell onto an island, his leg was hurt and forever afterwards he was lame. Nevertheless Hephaestus was a kindly and peace-loving god and very useful. He was very clever at making things out of metal, and the Greeks thought that the smoking volcanoes were his workshops. With the help of magic golden handmaidens he had created, Hephaestus made all the palaces and furniture, the armor and the weapons of the gods.

The goddess of Love and Beauty, Aphrodite, was later called Venus by the Romans. She was born from the foam of the sea. Gentle

winds lifted her up to Mt. Olympus, where the gods were amazed by her great beauty. Her radiant smile filled the earth with joy and flowers. Her beauty was so powerful that she could destroy men with it. In return for a favor that the lame and ugly Hephaestus had done for him, Zeus gave Aphrodite to Hephaestus to be his wife.

Hermes, another child of Zeus, was the messenger of the gods. On his sandals and hat, as well as on his magic wand, were wings to carry him instantly from place to place. Hermes was the most cunning of the gods, and when he was only a day old he stole Apollo's herd of sheep. But Zeus made Hermes give them back.

Both Zeus and Hera disliked their son, Ares, the god of War. Ares loved blood and violence, and was loud and boastful. The Greeks did not like Ares either. They believed that he was a bully, and also was a coward who howled with pain and ran away as soon as he was wounded. Every god had a certain kind of bird, and Ares' bird was the ugly vulture.

Another important member of this lively, quarrelsome family of Olympians was Hestia, sister of Zeus. She was goddess of the Home. Every meal the Greeks ate began and ended with a prayer to her.

Demeter, the other sister of Zeus, was goddess of the Harvest and of all growing things on earth. You will read more about her in a later story.

Of course, there were many lesser gods and goddesses living on Mt. Olympus. One of these was Eros, the son of Aphrodite. Eros (whom the Romans later called Cupid) had the power to shoot tiny arrows filled with the poison of love. He delighted in striking mortals with his arrows, and when he did they at once fell madly in love with the next person they saw.

Prometheus, the son of a Titan, was half-god and half-man. Because Prometheus had fought on the side of Zeus in the great war against Cronus, Zeus had not locked him up in Tartarus along with the other Titans. Prometheus was strong and noble and very brave, as you will find out in the next story.

PROMETHEUS

Before you read the story, ask one of your students to stand at the bulletin board and point out the god or goddess who is being referred to.

Read the first part, ending with "They should be our toys and playthings, and watching them should give us much pleasure." Stop there and ask your students to imagine that Zeus had given them the job of creating these new creatures. Hand out some clay, asking your students to follow Zeus's order by modeling the creature they would create if Zeus had given them the order. When all statues are done, perhaps each student could show his to the class or part of it and explain a little about his creation.

Before you read the next part of the story, ask your students to listen to what Prometheus decided to create. Read the second part, ending with "Finally he had a wonderful idea. But it was also a dangerous idea, and he would need help."

On the board write:

IDEA

1. wonderful
2. dangerous
3. he would need help

Ask your students to imagine or make up an idea they think Prometheus might have had. Tell them to make sure their ideas are wonderful, dangerous, and ones that would require Prometheus to get help.

After a few ideas have been presented, ask your students to listen and find out what Prometheus's idea was. Read the rest of the story.

VOCABULARY

Mount Olympus - where the gods and goddesses lived

Epimetheus - the foolish brother of Prometheus

chariot - a two-wheeled horse-drawn battle car

liver - a large organ of the body

talons - the sharp claws of a bird of prey

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. What could Prometheus do with his clay model that you couldn't do? (Give it life by planting a seed in it.) Why? (Discussion.)

2. What gift did Prometheus give man? (Fire.)

3. What did Prometheus say fire could do for man? (Give him light at night; help make weapons; help him make tools to plant seeds for food; give him warmth.)

4. Why was Zeus angry with Prometheus? (For giving something of the gods to man.)

5. How did Zeus punish Prometheus? (Chained him to a cliff where an eagle fed on his liver that kept growing back.)

6. Do you think Prometheus was sorry for stealing the gods' fire and giving it to man? Why or why not? (Discuss.)

7. Do you think Prometheus should have been sorry for what he did? Why or why not? (Discuss.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Clay models - see introduction.

2. If some of your brighter students have extra time, they might want to make stick puppets of Epimetheus, an elephant, a bird or two, a crab, a deer or two, a couple of cats, and a couple of bears. They might remove the necessary god and goddess puppets from the bulletin board and work up a puppet version of the story to present to the class, referring to their books if they want to.

Make sure the puppets and their labels are replaced on the bulletin board when the show is finished.

3. Suppose Zeus had grown tired of all the animals that had been created. Suppose he gave you the job of creating a new kind of animal, one that he had never before seen.

Draw a picture of the animal you think of and give him a name when you are done.

(Give your students a choice of manila paper shapes and sizes to draw on--long skinny shapes, curvy ones, zig-zag ones, even some 3-D ones you have stapled together. When students have finished, put their pictures on a bulletin board.)

4. Try to imagine how different our world would be if man had not discovered fire. Why is fire important? How has man used it? Write a story about life without fire. Perhaps you would like to use a pioneer setting.

PROMETHEUS

One afternoon when the earth was still very young, Zeus, chief of the gods and lord of all heaven and earth, sat in his palace on Mount Olympus. He gazed for a long time at his kingdom and then turned to his wife, who was sewing tiny stars on one of his royal cloaks.

"Hera," he said, "how beautiful everything is. How green and fragrant are the rolling hills of the earth below. The sweet smells of its flowers reach up even to our palace. And those soft, white clouds in the heavens--how they gleam and shimmer in the golden light of the day." Zeus paused, resting his chin upon his hand. "Why, then, am I not satisfied? Why do I feel that this beautiful world is not complete? What is missing?"

Hera looked up from her sewing. "Great Zeus, I cannot help you with such questions. Perhaps you should call a meeting of all the gods to talk about what is troubling you." Zeus agreed. Out went an order for all the gods and goddesses to gather in the great hall of the palace.

Zeus stood before the gods and asked them what they thought he should do. He especially wanted the advice of his favorite daughter, gray-eyed Athena, goddess of wisdom. Tall, straight, and beautiful, she rose. "Mighty father," she said, "my fellow Olympians and I have long known that you were troubled. We too have felt that something is missing in the world. I have given much thought to this matter, and now I think that perhaps it is time for some new creatures to be created."

There was a murmur of agreement from the other gods and goddesses.

"Such creatures," Athena went on, "would be different from anything the world has known. They would not be ugly monsters like those first children of Mother Earth and Father Heaven. And they would not be giants like the Titans."

Now Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, and a favorite of all the Olympians, spoke up. "These creatures that Athena suggests should be created to bring us joy--to serve and worship us, and to seek our help. They should be our toys and playthings, and watching them should give us much pleasure."

Zeus thought for a while. Then he said, "Perhaps you are right, my children. But I find I am too weary to create these creatures myself. It is hard work. Someone else will have to do the job. But who? Athena, perhaps you could do it, since you are the goddess of wisdom."

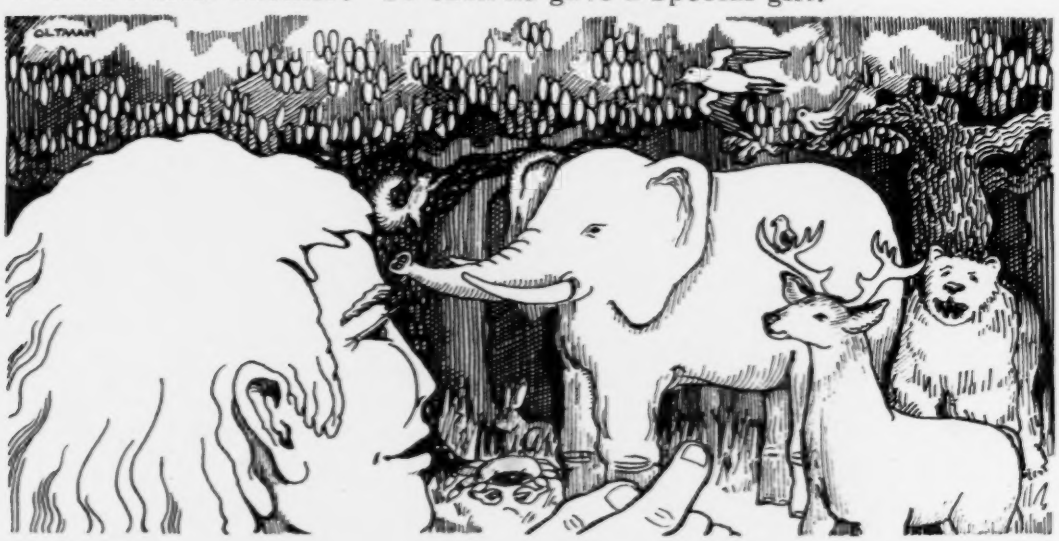
Athena rose to speak again. "No, father, I am not the one. But it is said that Prometheus, the Titan, is very wise. . . wiser even than any of the gods. I think he could make the kind of creatures that would please us."

Zeus nodded. "Yes," he said, "your idea is a good one. Call Prometheus here. I will give him the honor of creating earth's new beings."

Hermes, messenger of the gods, sped swiftly to earth, and soon a tremendous wind began to shake the marble walls of the palace. Rumbling sounds echoed down the hall toward the meeting room. At last, out of an enormous cloud shaped like a thunderhead, two gigantic beings stepped. Before the gods stood Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus, of the mighty race of Titans.

Prometheus listened carefully as Zeus told him what the gods had been talking about, and what they wanted him to do. It was also decided that some lesser creatures should be created called animals and birds and fish. Epimetheus would make these creatures, and Prometheus would look over his brother's work when it was finished. When Epimetheus heard this, he smiled and winked, and shuffled his gigantic feet. Then Prometheus thanked Zeus for giving such an important job to himself and his brother, and the two giants stepped into a shaft of light and vanished.

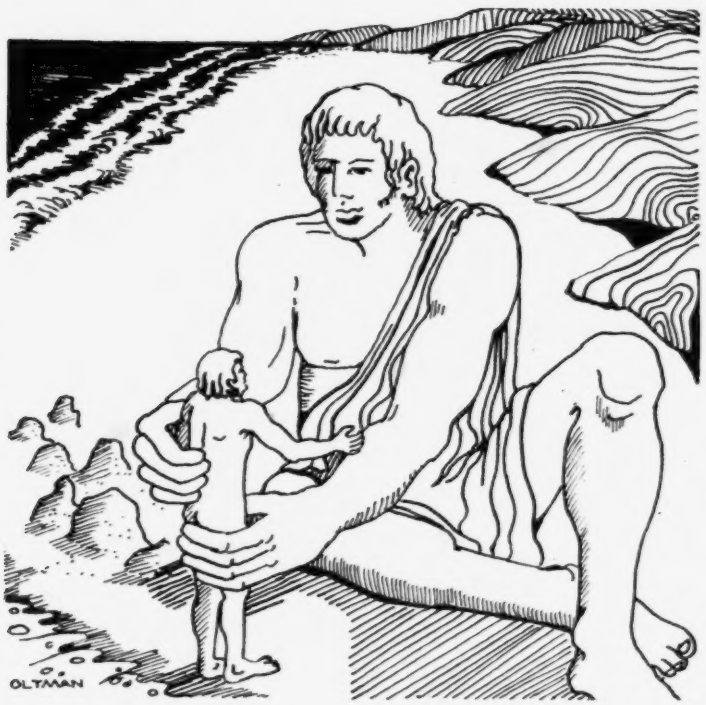
When the brothers got home, they at once began their work. Epimetheus was excited about his job, and he made one creature after another. To each he gave a special gift.



To the elephant he gave great size and strength. To the birds, he gave strong wings and sharp eyes. The birds must have been favorites of Epimetheus, for he gave them the extra gifts of beautiful song and many-colored feathers. To the crab he gave a hard shell and strong pincers, and to the deer a pair of sharp antlers, so that each could defend himself against his enemies. To the cats Epimetheus gave swiftness and sharp claws. To the giant bears of the north he gave both teeth and claws, as well as thick fur coats to protect them from the cold.

While Epimetheus was doing all of this, Prometheus sat on the shore of the ocean, staring at nothing and thinking about his task. As he sat, he played with the clay and sand on the shore. He made many shapes of the clay, but crumbled them all as a new idea struck him. Then Prometheus noticed that his hands seemed to be making one kind of shape more often than any other. He became excited and began to work very carefully. He would stop now and then to look over his model, scraping off a piece here or adding one there.

At last, Prometheus had made a shape that he liked. Then he took a rare and precious Seed of Life, which he had hidden away secretly for many ages, and pressed it deep into the center of the shape. A wonderful change began to come over the clay. It became warm. It opened its eyes and gazed on the world. It got up and stood on two legs, shaking all of its parts in wonder.



As Prometheus looked at his creation, he was pleased. He had made a creature that looked like the gods themselves. This was the first Man.

Prometheus took up his creature and hurried to his brother, for it was time to look at the work of Epimetheus. Also, Epimetheus had promised that he would save some special gift for the creature Man.

But when Prometheus arrived and asked for the special gift, Epimetheus stammered and shook his head. "Oh, my," he said, "I have done it again! Look here--look at all these creatures I have made. I have already given out all the gifts I had. I'm sorry, but I don't have anything left."

Prometheus was unhappy about this, but he was too wise to be angry. He only said, sadly, "Brother, I should have watched you more closely. I will simply have to think of something on my own." And taking the first Man in his great hand, Prometheus left.

Prometheus thought for many days and many nights about what to give Man. Finally, he had a wonderful idea. But it was also a dangerous idea, and he would need help.

Prometheus went to see his friend the goddess Athena, who had first suggested that he be given the task of making Man. Athena agreed to help Prometheus.

The next morning, Prometheus stole up to heaven, where the sun-god Apollo was just getting ready to drive his flaming chariot on the daily journey across the sky. Prometheus gave a signal, and at that moment Athena appeared and started talking with Apollo. While Apollo's head was turned, Prometheus lit a torch with the chariot fire, waved to Athena, and hurried back to earth.

Prometheus gave the lighted torch to Man and said, "I have brought you fire, the greatest gift of all. It will help you more than fur or feathers or strength or swiftness. With this gift you will have light even at night. With the help of fire, you can make weapons and be stronger than any of the animals. You can make tools to dig up the earth, so that you can plant seeds for food. Fire will make you warm in your house, no matter how cold it is outside. This gift will make you more

than a match for all the animals." The little creature was very happy with this great gift and knelt down to thank Prometheus.

But when Zeus found out that Prometheus had stolen the fire of the gods and given it to man, he was angry beyond words. Zeus thought for a long time, trying to decide how he should punish Prometheus.

Finally Zeus made up his mind. He had Prometheus tied up in strong chains and taken to the Caucasus Mountains. There he was fastened to the face of a great rocky cliff. Even worse, a great eagle perched near him on the cliff and fed on his liver. But Zeus made the liver grow back again as fast as the eagle ate it.

And so, for untold ages, Prometheus was chained to the mountain cliff, tortured by his chains and the eagle's beak and talons. Some people say that Zeus finally was sorry for this cruel punishment and set Prometheus free. But others believe that Prometheus still suffers on that distant mountain.

But one thing is certain--men have not forgotten Prometheus. They are still grateful for his gift of fire, which brought so much good to the world. Prometheus well deserves the name he wanted: "Helper of Man."

PANDORA'S BOX

Prepare two small cardboard boxes. Decorate one with gaily colored paper and a pretty design. Leave the other box plain. Into the pretty box put about thirty sheets of paper with sad things printed on them.

1. a girl tore her best dress
2. a boy fell down the stairs and hurt himself
3. a soldier died in a war
4. a dog got run over
5. a baby cut its knee

etc.

In the undecorated box put about twenty slips of paper (or even pieces of candy) with happy things printed on them.

1. you won a million dollars.
2. your mother bought you a huge ice cream cone
3. your birthday will come the next three days in a row

etc.

Ask students to line up behind the box of their choice and pick out a sheet of paper from that box. They must not look at what their paper says until everyone has drawn.

Have the pretty-box slips read first, then the others. Discuss the "lesson" learned about these messages (that a pretty exterior may contain ugliness or unpleasantness inside it).

Tell your students that in today's story they will hear about two things that are pretty on the outside and ugly underneath.

VOCABULARY

revenge - to get back at someone for doing wrong

wrath - anger

woefully - very sadly

resist - to stand firm against

curious - wanting to find out, wondering

mischievous - naughty

Pandora - the name of the first woman

curse - to send harm or wish harm on someone

greed - selfishness, taking more than one's share

slither - to slip or slide like a snake

infest - to spread over, to swarm over

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. What were the two beautiful things in the story? (Pandora, and the gold and silver box.)

2. What evils did each beautiful thing contain? (Pandora: foolishness, mischief, laziness, curiosity. Box: Sickness, Pain, Worry, Hate, Greed, Death - list the box's evils on the board.)

3. How was the world different after Pandora opened the box? (Evil was now in the world.)

4. Why did Zeus give Pandora to mankind? (He was angry with mankind and wanted to punish them.)

5. How did Pandora help Zeus get revenge on mankind? (She let loose the evils.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Ask your students to think of more evils to list on the board (Stealing, Lying, Tattle-taling, etc.) When they have run out of ideas, ask them to recall what the evils looked like according to the story. (Ugly insects and crawling worms.) Ask each student to choose one of the evils from the list on the board and make an ugly insect or crawly worm to represent it. Pass out scraps or small pieces of colored paper, scissors, and glue. As each student finishes, write the name of his evil on his bug or worm with magic marker (you might want to use white chalk for the darker evils.)

Pin them on a bulletin board just above the pretty box you used before the story, making the evils look as though they are just coming up out of the box.

Some of your students may wish to design the butterfly Hope.

2. Pretend that you have a box like Pandora's and that you can shut up evils inside it. Make a list of the things you would put inside the box. Think of the things you would like to see disappear from our world.

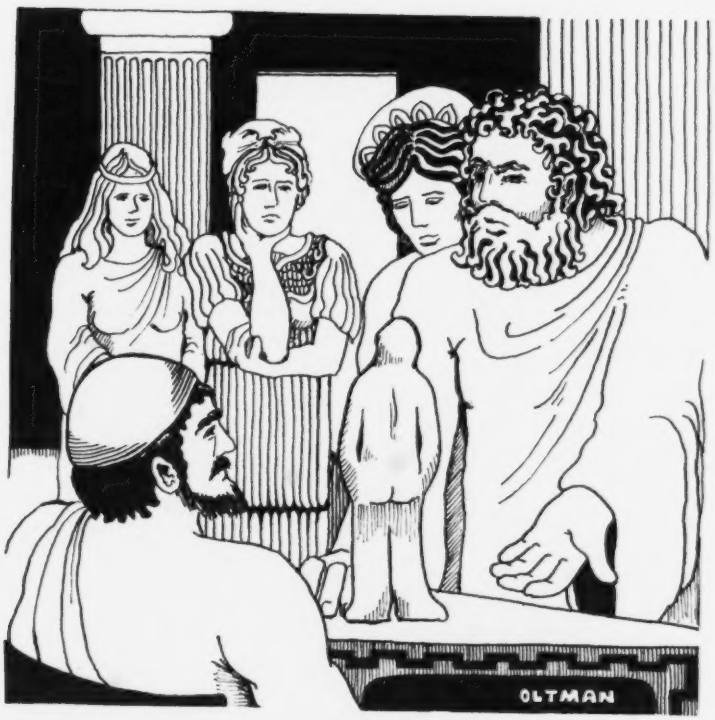
3. Try to imagine a world with <u>one</u> less evil. Think about how life would be different if just one thing on your list no longer existed. (What if there were no pain? sickness? anger?)

Write a story telling how life would be changed.

PANDORA'S BOX

Zeus's revenge on Prometheus would have been enough for any man. But Zeus was not a man. He was a god; and just any revenge did not satisfy him. Prometheus had stolen fire; but the fire was good for all men. So Zeus turned his wrath upon all mankind.

First he called upon Hephaestus to fashion a statue out of clay. When this was done Zeus called the other gods and goddesses together and set the statue before them.



"This," he said, "is Woman. But I think she still needs something. No man could love this." And he looked woefully at the lump of clay.

"I know what she needs," said Athena. "Let me help."

"Me, too," Aphrodite said.

All the gods, it seemed, wanted to help. And Zeus was very grateful. Athena gave the statue sparkling eyes and golden hair as soft as silk. Hestia, the goddess of the home, made her gentle; and Aphrodite made her lovable. But it was Hera who added the best touch: a beauty so great that no man could resist.

"That is just what I had in mind," said Zeus. "But, here, another gift for her: Woman, I make you foolish and curious. I command you to be lazy and mischievous. And I name you 'Pandora,' 'the all-gifted.'"

Then he sent Pandora to Prometheus's brother, Epimetheus. Prometheus had warned his brother not to accept a gift from Zeus, because that gift could only be a curse in disguise. But when Epimetheus beheld Pandora, he quickly forgot his brother's warning. He married Pandora on the spot; and for a short time they were happy.

As it happened, there was a gold and silver box in the home of Epimetheus. It was left there from the time he and Prometheus had made the first creatures. They had given all of the good and beautiful gifts to these beings, and they had placed all of the evil and ugly gifts in this box. Then they had chained it and locked it and bound it in ropes, so that none of the Evils inside could escape.

Pandora knew of this box, but she dared not go close to it. Epimetheus had seen her near it only once, and he had scolded her and made her promise to stay away. So, when Epimetheus was home, she did. But one day he left, only for a little while, but that was long enough.

The gods and goddesses had made Pandora beautiful; but Zeus had made her curious and full of mischief. With Epimetheus gone, she could resist the box no longer.

She stole over to it and quickly untied the ropes. Then she unfastened the chains. And finally she took the key that she had watched Epimetheus hide, and unlocked the box.

Thinking to just peek inside, she lifted the lid. But she never had time to shut it again. Instantly, all sorts of evil things rushed out. They were in the forms of ugly insects and crawling worms, and each had its own name: Sickness, Pain, Worry, Hate, Greed and Death. They buzzed around her head and slithered across her feet. Pandora screamed. Epimetheus heard her and came running to help. But he was too late. The Evils had bitten and stung Pandora, and they flew to attack him also.

Finally, when the buzzing stopped and the Evils had rushed out to infest the world, Pandora and Epimetheus lay on the floor. They were bruised and swollen with pain. As they lay there, they heard another fluttery sort of sound and thought that the Evils had returned. They tried to get up and run away but they could not.

Before they could take a step, a beautiful butterfly flew from the box. When Prometheus had put all of the Evils into that prison, he also had put Hope in there. With no Evil, there was no need for Hope. But now that the Evils were loose, all mankind would need Hope, if they were to have even a little comfort.

DEUCALION AND PYRRHA

Bring to class an object of gold (real or simulated), one of bronze (a doorknob perhaps), and one of iron. Ask your students to rank them from what they consider to be the prettiest to the ugliest material. Whichever way they rank the objects, tell them to listen to the story to find out how the Greeks ranked the materials.

Read the first part of the story (ending with "We call it the Milky Way.") Ask one student to rearrange the four objects as the Greeks saw them. (Gold, Silver, Bronze, Iron.) Ask students to recount what each age was like, listing their responses on the board in four columns. Compare the goodness and badness of the characteristics in the four columns.

Next ask what they think Zeus and the gods might have decided to do about the wickedness of mankind. Discuss the likelihood of the students' suggestions. (Would Zeus, given his personality, be likely to solve the problem the suggested ways?)

Ask your students to listen and find out what Zeus first decided to do, then what he finally does do.

Read the next part, ending right in the middle of the sentence: "Even as he said this, what should he see but . . . ."

Ask students to guess what Zeus saw. After a few guesses, repeat the last sentence and continue to the sentence ending, "and wondered what it (the voice from the gods) could mean."

Repeat what the voice said to Pyrrha and Deucalion: "Go into the world with your head covered, and as you go, throw the bones of your mother behind you."

Tell your students that by "mother," the voice meant Mother Earth. Ask them what they think Earth's bones might be. If no one guesses STONES, tell them it means stones in this particular riddle. Ask students what they think might have happened when Deucalion and Pyrrha threw stones behind them. After a few ideas have been suggested, read the rest of the story.

VOCABULARY - Part I

to labor - to work hard

to hoard something - to store it away for yourself and not share it with others

idleness - laziness

stealth - being sneaky

cunning - being sly and tricky

violence - using physical force

lust - strong desire for something

Part II

to be overcome - to be defeated

hasty - acting quickly

Part III

Mount Parnassus - a mountain in Greece (you might want to locate it in an atlas.)

Deucalion (dū kāl´yən) - son of Prometheus: he was a good person

Pyrrha (pir´ə) - wife of Deucalion

blameless - not guilty, without blame (compare to taste-tasteless, name-nameless)

barren - empty, bare

foul-smelling - bad-smelling

renew - to make new again (compare with reread, remake, redo)

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. Zeus was so angry at mankind that he started to do what to destroy them all? (Throw a thunderbolt at the earth.)

2. Why did the gods stop Zeus? (They told him he might destroy the heavens as well.) What attitude about mankind did the gods seem to have? (Not care much about them.)

3. How did Zeus destroy the world? (Flood.)

4. How do you feel about Zeus destroying the earth and everything on it? (Discuss.)

5. How did Deucalion feel about being spared from the flood, as he was saying, "To live forever in a barren land, hearing no voices but our own; remembering faces from other days; aching for summer and a green hillside"? (Discuss.)

6. What happened to the stones Deucalion and Pyrrha threw behind them? (Became men and women.)

7. What else did the gods bring forth on the earth? (Grass, flowers, animals, fish.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Make strips of paper with one of the following sentences on each strip:

Gold
- a. People lived together peacefully.
- b. People always got along well together.
- c. Everyone was well fed.
- d. Crops sprang from the soil without being planted.
- e. Everyone was healthy.
- f. Trees and vines forever bore fruit.
- g. Everyone shared his belongings with his neighbors.

Silver
- a. People were cold at times.
- b. Homes were made, usually in caves.
- c. Spears were fashioned from sharp sticks.
- d. Animals were killed for their meat and fur.
- e. Man had to plant crops.

Bronze
- a. Man had become greedy.
- b. People were suspicious of one another.
- c. People did not share their belongings.
- d. Rich people were lazy.

Bronze
- e. Poor people were not helped by their rich neighbors.
- f. People sneaked around doing dishonest deeds.
- g. People tricked one another.

Iron
- a. Crime spread all over the earth.
- b. People were violent.
- c. A person was unsafe in his own house.
- d. Nations sent their armies to conquer land that all people once shared in common.
- e. People would do bad deeds to gain gold and silver.
- f. Fathers could not trust their sons.
- g. Mothers could not trust their daughters.

Put the strips in four hats - one labelled Golden Age, one Silver Age, one Bronze, and one Iron. Let each student pick a slip from the hat of his choice and draw (or paint) a picture of what his slip refers to. When students are finished, ask them to print what their slip says across the top of their picture and pin it up on the appropriate section of a bulletin board which you have divided into Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Iron.

2. Pretend you are a primitive person looking up at the Milky Way one night. Make up a story about how you think the Milky Way came to be.

(Have your students read their stories to each other in small groups.)

3. Give each of your students a ball of clay. Tell the boys to pretend they are Deucalion and the girls Pyrrha. Instead of throwing the clay back over their shoulders, ask them to fashion a man or a woman from it. Once the people are modeled, place them on a large surface and use construction paper scraps, crepe paper, paste, tape, and scissors to decorate the area with grass, stand-up flowers, animals, and fish, thereby creating the world after the great flood.

DEUCALION AND PYRRHA

After the gods had created the world, mankind lived in a Golden Age. For thousands of years, the earth was without war or bloodshed. Anger was unknown. So was hunger. Crops sprang from the soil without being sown. Trees and vines forever bore fruit. People lived long, enjoying all the gifts of the earth without fear or greed or sickness.

But the Evils that Pandora had turned loose began their work. Zeus shortened the spring and divided the year into seasons. For the first time, man knew what it was to be cold. Homes were made, usually in caves. Spears were fashioned from sharp sticks. Animals were killed for their meat and fur, so that man might survive the winter. Crops no longer grew without planting. Man had to labor and plan. This was called the Silver Age.

The Age of Bronze came next and the spirit of man turned sour. He became greedy and suspicious. The treasures of earth were no longer shared but hoarded and stored away. Those who had grown rich wasted themselves in idleness, caring not at all that their neighbor might be starving. Trust disappeared

from the affairs of men. Stealth and cunning took its place.

Zeus, looking down from Mount Olympus, was not pleased with what he saw. Still he held his anger, hoping that mankind might improve.

But alas, poor Zeus! Mankind did not improve. The Iron Age came next and things got even worse.

No one obeyed the law anymore. Crime and violence spread over the earth until no man was safe in his own house. Nations sent their armies to conquer the lands that all people once shared in common. Honor was cast aside in the lust for gold and power. Family love died. Fathers could not trust their sons, nor mothers their daughters.

Zeus, seeing how low man had become, was filled with rage. He called all the gods to counsel with him on Mount Olympus. And from the far corners of the world they came, along the road to the palace in the sky. So well worn did the road become that it can still be seen today, stretched across the face of the heavens. We call it the Milky Way.

When all the gods were present in the great council chamber, Zeus spoke to them. He explained how terrible the race of man had become.

"Rather than let creatures such as these live on the earth, I will destroy them," said he. "And in their place, I will set a new race, more worthy to live and worship us."

Taking a thunderbolt in hand, he was about to throw it at the earth when one of the gods reminded him that such a great fire might well destroy heaven itself. Zeus, therefore, decided on water.

"Let dark clouds cover the earth," said he. "And let there be rain until no dry land remains."

Then he called for his brother, Poseidon, and asked him to pour forth the waters of the rivers and of the sea as well. This was done, and the earth began to drown.

Soon all crops were destroyed. Vineyards and orchards were swallowed up. Houses, shops, and temples, if they were not swept away, were covered by the flood.

Men and animals alike struggled for a time but were overcome. Birds of the air, wearied of flying, fell to their death in the water. For the earth was one great sea.

Zeus was satisfied. In fact, seeing the flood, he was almost sad for having destroyed the race of man so completely.

"They were my children, after all," said he. "Wicked though they were, I may have been a bit hasty."

Even as he said this, what should he see but a great chest bobbing on the waters. In the chest were two people, Deucalion, son of Prometheus, and his good wife, Pyrrha.

The chest floated up to the tip of Mount Parnassus, which was all that stood above the water. There Deucalion and Pyrrha got out of the chest and climbed upon the rocks. Weeping for the fate of mankind, they clung to each other in despair, knowing that it was only a matter

of time before they too should die.

Zeus was moved to pity. For Deucalion and Pyrrha had been good people. Their lives had been pure and blameless. Truly, they deserved to live.

At once, Zeus ordered the north wind to drive away the clouds. Poseidon, god of the sea, had his son blow upon a great shell as a signal for the waters to withdraw.

And the waters obeyed. The sea pulled back to within its shores. Rivers returned to their beds. The sun shone down on a slime-gray world where birds did not sing nor flowers bloom.

Deucalion spoke softly to his wife.

"Pyrrha, all mankind and the world we knew has ended here in death. You and I alone the gods have spared. I wonder why. To live forever in a barren land, hearing no voices save our own; remembering faces from other days; aching for summer and a green hillside? If I were a god, dear Pyrrha, I would create man all over again, just as Prometheus did in the beginning. But I am not a god. I am a man and I don't know what to do.

Pyrrha gently took his hand.

"Deucalion," said she, "take heart. You have served the gods well. They will remember you."

Going down the mountain then, they came upon the ruins of an old temple. The walls were half-crumbled and covered with slime. No fire burned on the altar. Still they knelt in the foul-smelling mud and prayed that the gods might guide them.

And from the altar, a voice from the gods answered.

"Leave the temple. Go into the world with your head covered, and as you go, throw the bones of your mother behind you."

Deucalion and Pyrrha were greatly puzzled by this and wondered what it could mean. They thought about it for a time, then Pyrrha spoke.

"We cannot obey," she said. "The bones of our mother must never be disturbed."

Deucalion agreed but he still wasn't satisfied. The voice must have meant something else.

He left the temple and walked a long way off, lost in thought. At last he returned to Pyrrha. He was smiling.

"Have you forgotten that Prometheus made man from the earth?" he asked. "The earth is mother to us all. The bones the voice spoke of are these stones at our feet."

"You must be right!" cried Pyrrha. "It's worth a try at least."

Veiling their faces they walked along, picking up stones and throwing them back over their shoulders. The stones they threw began to grow soft. Slowly they took on human form. The wet slime that covered them became flesh. The hard part turned to bone. Veins in the rock became round and filled with blood.

Stones thrown by Deucalion became men; those thrown by Pyrrha became women.

Zeus sent gods to bring forth grass and flowers. Animals were returned to the forest, fish to the rivers and the sea. And in this way the race was renewed; the world was made whole again.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE

Take Demeter off the bulletin board. Ask the class what duties she might have as goddess of plants. (Making plants grow.) Ask what powers she might have over plants. (The power to make plants live and grow, or shrivel and die.)

Take Hades off the bulletin board and ask your students to recall what they know about him. (Gloomy, has a hard heart, god of the dead who is unwelcome on Mt. Olympus.)

Tell your students that today's story is like a tug-of-war between Demeter and Hades. Ask them to listen to the story to see who wins the tug-of-war.

VOCABULARY

Demeter (di mē´ tər) - goddess of plants and the harvest

Persephone (pər sef´ ə nē) - beautiful daughter of Demeter

garlands - wreaths

mortals - people, humans

well-laden tables - tables with plenty of food on them

chariot - a two-wheeled carriage pulled by horses

chasm - a deep crack in the earth

whimper - a low whining sound

mourning - being unhappy

wither - to become dry and lifeless

pomegranate - (If you can find one in a grocery store, bring it to class, cut it open, and let your students eat the seeds, telling them that Persephone eats six pomegranate seeds in the story) - a red fruit, about the size of an orange, with thick skin; contains many red seeds, which are eaten.

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. Who was the tug-of-war about? (Persephone.)

2. Who won the tug-of-war, Demeter or Hades? (Neither.) Why? (It was decided that Persephone would spend half her time with each of them.)

3. What mistakes did Persephone make that caused Demeter pain? (She disobeyed her mother's warning and wandered out of the field; she ate six pomegranate seeds.)

4. What lesson did Persephone learn? (She should have obeyed her mother's warning.)

5. According to Greek mythology, why do the leaves begin to turn color and to fall from the trees every autumn? (They are telling of Persephone's journey to the world below, where she meets her husband.)

6. Why aren't there many flowers and leaves during the winter months, according to the ancient Greeks? (Because Demeter is mourning Persephone's absence.)

7. Why do buds come again to the trees every spring? (Demeter is preparing the earth for the homecoming of her beloved daughter Persephone, who will stay on earth for six months.)

8. What natural process does this story explain? (The changing of the seasons.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Suppose you were an Eskimo living way up near the north pole. Winter and darkness were all you knew for nine months every year. For three glorious months of every year the sun would shine, the snow would melt, and you could throw off your heavy sealskin parka during the day. How might you explain the yearly change in the weather?

Ask your students to write a short story as though they were an Eskimo explaining why the sun comes out to warm up the land and why the land again becomes cold and dark after three months of sunshine.

After students have written their stories, ask them to make a picture to go with the story. After sharing their work, compile the stories and pictures into a class book, entitled Eskimos Explain Seasons.

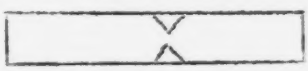
2. "Let's have a contest," one cried. "Let's see who can find the most beautiful flower."

There are many ways of making flowers from construction, crepe, or tissue paper. Decide on or look up one way, gather the necessary materials; and suggest that your students have a contest to see who can create the prettiest, the funniest, the most colorful, and the most original flower. Give four construction paper ribbons in each category.

When the flowers are finished, pin them or hang them anonymously in an attractive arrangement. Ask a small group of 6th or 2nd graders to be the judges and to award the ribbons.

3. You may want to make a garland or two as a class project. Using three five or six-inch squares of colored tissue paper, fold them fan-like into about seven parts.

Holding the flower folded up, cut notches out of each side at the center.



Wrap a two or three-inch pipe cleaner around the center, leaving enough at each end of the pipe cleaner to attach this flower to the next one.

Attach about 20 flowers together to form a garland to be worn around the head or neck of some student because of some achievement in citizenship or school work.

4. Compare Demeter's warning, "Remember, Persephone, remember to stay with your friends and do not wander out of this field," with Peter Rabbit's mother's warning, "Whatever you do, Peter, don't go into Mr. MacGregor's garden."

You may want to read the story Peter Rabbit to your class beforehand if your students are not familiar with it.

1. Why was the warning given in each case?

2. Did Persephone and Peter follow their mother's advice? Why or why not?

3. What happened because they did not listen to their mothers' warnings?

4. This myth represents winter as a time of sadness and mourning. But winter can be a happy time. Many people look forward to winter time. Ask students to write a myth or story that explains winter as a good gift from the gods and a pleasant, joyous time. They may make up their own mythological characters or use some of the Greek (or Norse) gods and goddesses.

5. Ask students to imagine Persephone eating the pomegranate seeds. Where was she when she ate them? Did she know she shouldn't eat them? What caused her to eat them? What happened after she ate them? Have students write a vivid eye-witness account of the event.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE

nce there was no fall and no winter. Flowers bloomed all year long. Demeter, goddess of the harvest, called happily to her friend the sun to shine and warm the earth. She loved to see her beautiful daughter Persephone wearing garlands of roses. She laughed as the sun touched the girl's hair with gold. It was a time of joy on Olympus and below in the valleys and plains where the mortals lived, for Demeter's happiness meant rich crops and well-laden tables.

Each day Demeter had many tasks to do in helping the crops to grow, so she would leave Persephone with her friends in the fields. "Remember, Persephone," Demeter would say as she

left every morning, "remember to stay with your friends and do not wander out of this field."

"But Mother," Persephone would ask, "what could happen? This is our home. Who could hurt us here?"

"I love you, my daughter," Demeter would answer. "But there are those who could hurt you or take you from me."

After Demeter left, the young girls would dance and weave garlands of flowers and talk happily together. On this day, however, they grew bored. "Let's have a contest," one cried. "Let's see who can find the most beautiful flower." The girls all laughed excitedly, and Persephone forgot her mother's warning. She knew which flower she would pick. It was the beautiful primrose. She had seen it once by a forest pool. She had gone there then with her mother, but she thought that she could remember how to find the spot again. As she walked she looked eagerly among the grasses and at the roots of the great forest trees. Perhaps, she thought, she could find two beautiful flowers.

Suddenly, the earth shook beneath her, and then with a roaring sound it broke open. Persephone was thrown to the ground. She looked up and saw with terror a great black chariot, pulled by huge black horses, thundering up out of the chasm. "Mother, help me!" she cried, dropping her flowers and trying to run. But it was as if she couldn't run at all. She stumbled and fell, rising only to stumble and fall again. Out of breath she lay quietly, sobbing.

"Let me alone. Oh, please let me alone," she whimpered as a strong, rough arm pulled her into the chariot. "You're hurting me! Oh, please let me go! Let me go back to my mother!" Persephone's words were in vain. The chariot was that of Hades, god of the Underworld. With his great arm holding her tightly around her waist, he drove the horses back into the depths of the earth.

The horses plunged down and down, and a smell of mold and dampness replaced the perfume of the flowers. Darkness dropped about the chariot, and the garland of roses that Persephone wore wilted. Below the earth there were sounds of weeping;

winds wept here in the rustle of dry leaves. Persephone's flesh grew cold. Hades, the lord of the dead, had claimed her for his bride.

Above on earth there was silence. Birds had stopped singing, the bees had stopped buzzing. The flowers hung their heads and the sun pulled a cloud across his face. Demeter was alarmed. She left the mortals she was helping and hurried back to the fields of Olympus. "Persephone! Persephone!" she called frantically. "My daughter, where are you?" The streams whimpered and the winds sighed, but they feared Hades and they were afraid to answer Demeter's question. The sun knew and would have told Demeter, but he was too filled with grief.

For nine days Demeter searched the earth for her daughter. She forgot everything else but her grief. "Persephone," she mourned, "Persephone, you were the most beautiful of all, the most loving of all. Where are you, my daughter? I miss you so." Demeter wept and grew old. Once she had been as lovely as trees in blossom, but now her hair turned white and hung about her tear-streaked face. She wore only black. Finally, the sun could not bear her moaning any longer. "Demeter," he called, pulling the clouds from his face. "Demeter, I know where Persephone is, and all your mourning will do no good. Hades has taken her to be his bride."

Then the goddess was enraged. She cursed the earth for opening. "You helped Hades and now you will suffer." Turning from the fields she went into her house and wept. Hating the earth she let its flowers die. The rains were not called and the sun stayed always behind the clouds. There were no more

harvests and the tables were empty. On Olympus and below, there was sadness. Finally Zeus himself could stand it no longer. He could have ordered Demeter to return to her fields, but her grief would have made the flowers wither, and spoiled the fruit on the branches. Instead he sent his messenger, Hermes, to Hades and demanded that he release Persephone.

When Hermes returned from his trip to the Underworld, he told his news to Demeter. "Zeus has commanded Hades to release your daughter," he told the goddess. "There is only one condition. The fates have ruled that anyone who eats food in the land of the dead must remain there forever."

"Hermes," Demeter exclaimed, "what wonderful news you bring me! Oh, there are so many things I must do now before Persephone returns. Thank you," she cried, whirling away from him and running out into the fields. The sun came out from behind his clouds, the flowers bloomed, the rain touched the earth gently. The winds sang songs in the grasses and the tree boughs. Persephone was beloved by all.

When all preparations were made, Demeter dressed herself in a long white robe with a golden border. She wove a garland of roses for Persephone and sat down to wait for her to return. Soon she heard someone calling her name, but it was Hermes.

"Where is Persephone? Hermes, tell me, where is my daughter?"

"Demeter," the messenger said sadly, "I bring you news of joy and sorrow. Persephone has eaten six pomegranate seeds in the kingdom of the dead."

"Oh," cried Demeter, "will she not be coming back then? Alas!"

"Wait!" Hermes said. "Zeus has ruled that each year she must spend six months in the Underworld, one for each seed she ate, and the other six months with you on earth. She is coming soon. I came to tell you."

Then Demeter saw Persephone running toward her. "My child," she wept, "how happy I am that you are with me!" Persephone wept too, and her eyes grew sad as she told her mother of the kingdom she had left. In her coming home there was sadness, for she knew she would have to return to the Underworld.

When the leaves begin to turn color and to fall from the trees they are telling of Persephone's journey to the world below, where she meets her husband. Through the winter months Demeter mourns her absence. But in the spring, when the buds come again to the trees, men know that Persephone is once more returning to see her mother, who prepares the earth for the homecoming of her beloved daughter.

SISYPHUS

Ask your students to recall the punishments in the Greek stories they know. As students mention each punishment, list it on the board. In order to warm up your students' memories, ask such questions as:

1. How and why did Cronus punish Uranus in the first story? (Cronus wounds Uranus with a scythe because Uranus imprisoned Mother Earth's children.)

2. How and why was Cronus punished? (Zeus struck Cronus down with a thunderbolt because Cronus had swallowed Zeus's brothers and sisters.)

3. What happened to Prometheus? (Zeus chained him to a rock for giving the gift of fire to man, and an eagle fed on his liver.)

4. How did Zeus get revenge on mankind for using the gift of fire? (Zeus gave Pandora and her curiosity to mankind. Pandora then opened up the box of evils which flew out into the world and today cause mankind great misery.)

5. How did Zeus punish mankind because mankind had turned so evil? (He destroyed the world with a flood.)

6. How and why did Demeter punish the earth? (She made the earth barren of plants because it had opened up and swallowed her beloved daughter Persephone.)

7. Do you think the various punishments were fair? Why or why not? If not, what do you think would have been a fair punishment? (Discuss.)

Tell your students that Sisyphus gets punished in today's story. Ask them to listen to the story to find out how he is punished and why.

VOCABULARY

Sisyphus (sis´ i fəs) - the smartest man in ancient Greece

Merope (mər ō´ pē) - wife of Sisyphus

Asopus (ə sō´ pəs) - river god

Aegine (ə gē nə) - daughter of Asopus

Corinth - a town in Greece

Autolycus (ə tŏ́ li cŭs) - the master thief

Thantos - god of death

hover - to move back and forth unsurely

boulder - a huge roundish stone

eternity - forever, without end

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

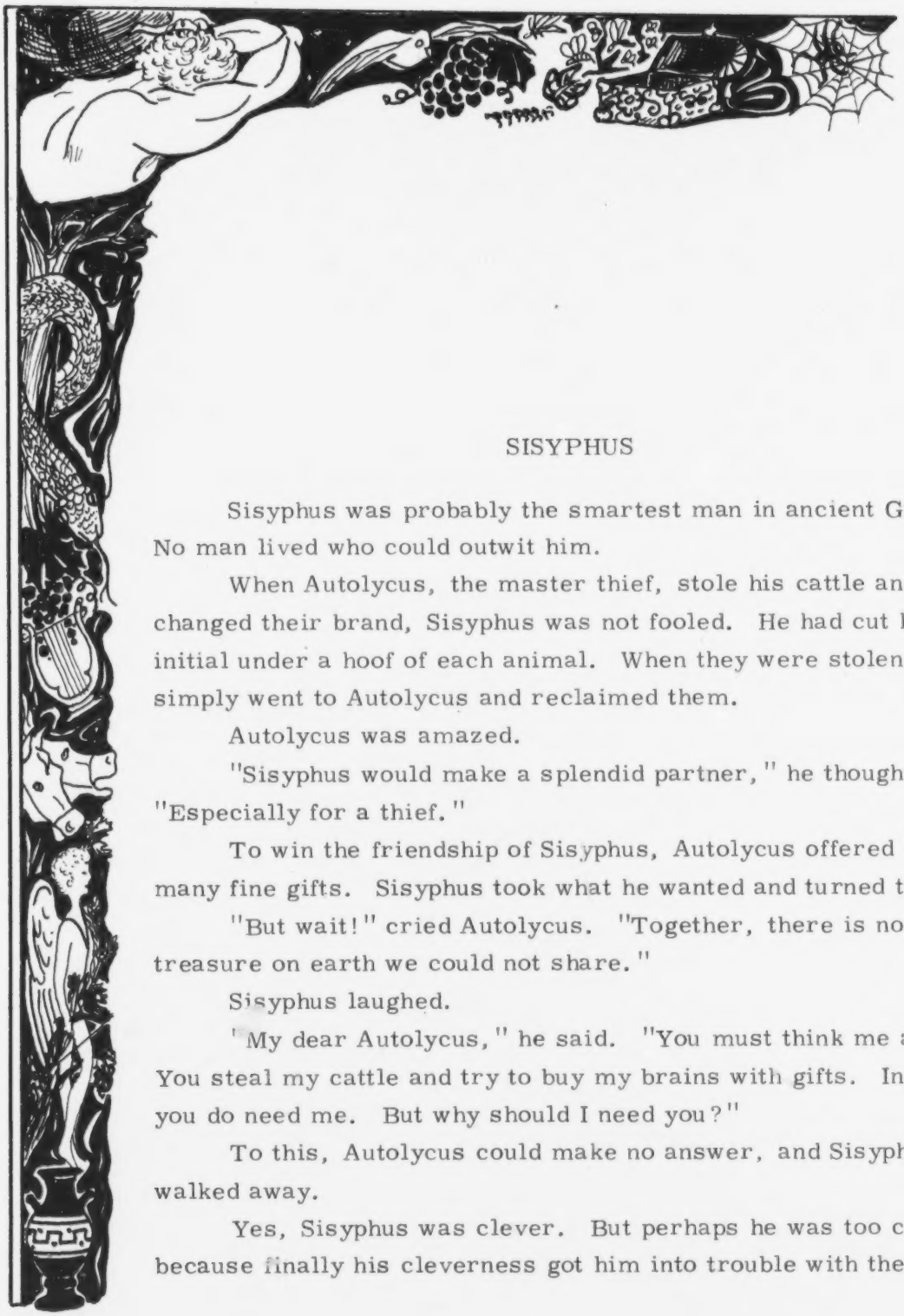
1. Whom did Sisyphus outsmart and how? (Autolycus, by putting a hidden brand on his own cattle's feet so that he could redeem them after Autolycus stole them; Asopus, the river god, by getting a stream from him; Thantos, the god of death, by kicking over his cup; Hades, god of the Underworld, by getting permission to return to earth and then not returning to the Underworld as he had promised Hades.)

2. What was Sisyphus's punishment? (To forever roll a huge boulder up a steep hill until he got it nearly to the top, when the boulder would roll back to the bottom and Sisyphus would have to start all over again.)

3. Do you feel that Sisyphus deserved his punishment? Why or why not? (Discuss.)

ACTIVITY

Sisyphus was a clever man. See if you can figure out a way for him to outwit Hades once more so he will not have to push the stone up the hill forever. Write a story about it.



SISYPHUS

Sisyphus was probably the smartest man in ancient Greece. No man lived who could outwit him.

When Autolycus, the master thief, stole his cattle and changed their brand, Sisyphus was not fooled. He had cut his initial under a hoof of each animal. When they were stolen, he simply went to Autolycus and reclaimed them.

Autolycus was amazed.

"Sisyphus would make a splendid partner," he thought. "Especially for a thief."

To win the friendship of Sisyphus, Autolycus offered him many fine gifts. Sisyphus took what he wanted and turned to go.

"But wait!" cried Autolycus. "Together, there is no treasure on earth we could not share."

Sisyphus laughed.

"My dear Autolycus," he said. "You must think me a fool. You steal my cattle and try to buy my brains with gifts. Indeed, you do need me. But why should I need you?"

To this, Autolycus could make no answer, and Sisyphus walked away.

Yes, Sisyphus was clever. But perhaps he was too clever, because finally his cleverness got him into trouble with the gods.

It happened this way.

Zeus, king of the gods, fell in love with Aegina, the beautiful daughter of the river god Asopus. Every day he called upon her, and she, seeing him in all his might, was greatly impressed. She could not go away with him, however, because her father disapproved.

But Zeus was headstrong. After a time, he grew tired of waiting. One fine day, he simply snatched Aegina from her home and rode off with her in his chariot. Asopus gave chase.

Zeus headed straight for Olympus, knowing that he'd be safe there. On his way, he passed through Corinth. There, at a fork in the road, Sisyphus happened to recognize him as he flashed on by.

Soon after, Asopus came raging in pursuit.

"Has a chariot passed this way recently?" he demanded.

Sisyphus smiled. He recognized the river god.

"As a matter of fact, yes. Only moments ago Zeus flew by as though he were being chased."

"He was!" boomed Asopus. "Was there a woman with him?"

Sisyphus thought a moment.

"I believe there was. Indeed, I'm sure of it. A very beautiful woman too. She kept yelling something at the horses. It was either 'go' or 'stop,' though I couldn't say which."

"It was 'stop'!" cried Asopus. "You can be sure of that! Zeus, the rascal, has kidnapped my daughter!"

Sisyphus shook his head.

"My, my," he said. "What's this world coming to?"

"Quickly!" roared Asopus. "Which way did they go?"

Sisyphus scratched his head. He looked first one way then the other and couldn't seem to make up his mind.

"Dear me," he said. "I'm in such a whirl these days. If only I had a spring to water my vineyards in the valley below, I'm sure my thoughts would clear."

Asopus sprang from his chariot and struck the ground with his sword. Instantly a cool spring bubbled forth.

"Now I remember!" cried Sisyphus. "They went that way!"

He pointed down the road to the right. Asopus leaped back into the chariot and shot away at full speed. Presently he came to a pass in the mountains and, cutting through, stopped Zeus where the road doubled back. Aegina jumped from the chariot and ran to her father. They sped off in a thunder of hooves before Zeus could get turned around.

More angry than he had ever been, Zeus returned to Olympus. There all the gods laughed at him.

"Poor Zeus," they chuckled. "He might have won the girl if Sisyphus hadn't told on him."

Hearing this, Zeus stormed back to the palace and summoned Thantos, the god of death.

"Sisyphus is yours," he said. "Punish him as you will."

Grinning with pleasure and rubbing his hands, Thantos went down to the spring. He found Sisyphus there planting olive trees.

From a small flask, Thantos poured the cup of death which no man can refuse. Before he could offer it, however, Sisyphus spoke.

"Sweet is your wine, mighty Thantos. And gladly will I drink it when it's offered to me. But here the living waters bubble at our feet. Sweet indeed is the taste of it! Let it be my cup to you while I yet live and can offer it."

Thantos was touched. Seeing no harm in the offer, he set his own cup on a rock and bent down to drink.

But before his lips had touched the water, Sisyphus kicked over the cup of death, clamped an iron collar about the neck of Thantos, and chained him to the rock. Rage and scream as he would, Thantos could not get free.

"The day will come when you'll pray for the cup I poured for you!" cried he.

Sisyphus laughed and snapped his fingers in the death god's face.

Centuries passed. All the mortals of earth rejoiced, for no one died with Thantos chained.

Zeus, busy with other things, forgot about Thantos until he chanced to pass the spring one day. There sat the death god moaning in his chains. To free him, Zeus tore away the collar with his own hands.

"Show no mercy to Sisyphus," said he. "Too long has he embarrassed the gods. Let him end with the sun today. Then take him to the Underworld, where Hades shall punish him forever among the dead."

Going into Corinth, Thantos poured his special wine into a cup that Sisyphus used. When mealtime came and Sisyphus drank, he knew that he had tasted death. Quickly he called for his wife Merope.

"I am dying," he said. "When I am dead, bury me. But do not make the usual offering to the gods."

Merope agreed to this. So Sisyphus breathed his last and soon found himself in the Underworld.

Hades, god of the Underworld, spoke to him.

"Well, Sisyphus, you've had a gay time. But here you are at last. Don't think that your punishment is going to be light."

Sisyphus hung his head.

"Noble Hades," said he. "I have angered the gods and am ready to take whatever punishment you think fit. I know I deserve it. Mine has been an evil life. Yet, even I may feel shame. Therefore, grant me one favor so that I may truly serve the gods at last."

Hades leaned forward on his throne.

"Your clever tongue is well known to me," he said. "I hardly dare listen. Yet, you seem sincere. So ask your favor. But mind you. If this is a trick, you'll regret it for all eternity."

Sisyphus dropped to his knees.

"Great Hades, my wife failed to make an offering at my grave. This is an insult to the gods and a deep shame to me. I ask only that I may return briefly to the upper world and set this matter right."

Hades thought this over carefully. He paced back and forth before his throne, watching Sisyphus out of the corner of his eye. At last, he gave in.

"All right," said he. "You have a day and a night. Return to the world above and see that the proper offering is made."

So Sisyphus was returned to his home. Once there, however, he forgot all about his promise.

"Let Hades worry about the dead," thought he. "I'm not dead and I'll not go back."

Sisyphus lived on then for many years while Hades burned with anger and revenge. At last, however, as all men do, he grew old and died. This time, when he descended into the Underworld, Hades was waiting for him. He led him to a hill so steep and difficult of footing that it could hardly be climbed. At the bottom of the hill lay a huge boulder.

Hades spoke.

"Sisyphus, you have been too clever for your own good. You don't keep your word, and you have deceived Zeus, Thantos, and me. From this time on, therefore, you shall not rest until that great boulder rests on top of the hill."

Groaning at his fate, Sisyphus put his shoulder to the stone. He found that he could scarcely budge it. Yet, straining every muscle, he was finally able to inch the rock slowly up the hill. His feet slipped at every step. His body throbbed with pain.

But the top slowly came in view; his struggle was nearly done. With all his remaining strength, he gave a mighty heave. The boulder moved up, hovered on the

crest for a moment, then lurched from his grip and thundered back to the bottom once more. Heartbroken, Sisyphus had to start all over again.

And so he spends eternity, forever rolling his great stone up the hill, knowing that as soon as he gets it to the top it will roll back down again. This is the fate that too much cleverness earned for him.

TANTALUS

(Note: You may want to read Aesop's "The Fox and the Grapes" to your students and get at the meaning of the word tantalize in that way.)

Discuss the meaning of the word tantalize: to tease or torment by presenting something desirable to view but keeping it out of reach.

Ask your students what would tantalize a hungry dog, a man in the desert, a skier with a broken leg, a bored school child, a puppy in a store window.

Tell them that today's story is about a man named Tantalus. Ask students to listen to find out how the story of Tantalus is like the word tantalize.

VOCABULARY

Tantalus (tan´ tə ləs) - a mortal, although he is the son of Zeus

turrets and spires - towers and steeples

Pelops (pē´ läps) - son of Tantalus

gruesome - causing a feeling of fear and horror

cauldron - a large kettle

treachery - breaking of a law or promise for ugly reasons

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. How is the story of Tantalus like the word "tantalize"? (Both suggest being tempted by something you cannot obtain. The word, of course, is derived from the name and the story.)

2. One of Tantalus's sins was taking some ambrosia, the food of the gods, and giving it to man. Why did this anger Zeus? (Because Zeus felt that mankind should not eat the food of the gods.) Who else did a similar thing in another story we have read? (Prometheus took fire from the gods and gave it to man.)

3. What did Tantalus do to get revenge on Zeus for scolding him? (He served up his own son at a banquet.)

4. What did Zeus do to punish Tantalus? (Placed him chin-deep in the cool waters of a pond with boughs of lush fruit just out of his reach. Tantalus was unable to eat or drink, and a huge boulder was above him, held only by a chain.)

5. Why do you think Tantalus, who had everything--wealth, popularity, and happnness--turned bad? (Discuss.)

6. Do you think Tantalus's punishment was fair? Why or why not? (Discuss.)

ACTIVITIES

1. In the story of Tantalus we learned that people like you and me could go up to the home of the gods for dinner. We heard Tantalus invite Zeus and the other gods to his house on earth for dinner.

Suppose you were invited up to Mt. Olympus. What would you wear for the special occasion? What would it be like to eat supper with the gods? What would you see there? What would you say to Zeus, to Demeter, to the other gods and goddesses? What magic tricks would they play while you were up there, perhaps?

Discuss a few possibilities. Then ask a few volunteers who have ideas to role-play one of the situations.

If the students have few suggestions, ask them to think a moment and then draw a picture of themselves talking to one of the gods, using cartoon balloons.

TANTALUS

Tantalus had more reason to be happy than all the other men in Greece. He was the son of Zeus, the king of the gods himself. Because of this, the gods welcomed him and called him friend even though he was mortal. They gave him gifts and the power to understand the hidden things of earth; the mysteries of land, sea, and air. He was made a king. The fields and orchards of his kingdom stretched lush and green for miles. His flocks and herds could not be counted in a year.

Great was his wealth and power. Great, too, was the love that his people had for him.

"There," they would say. "Where the sun dances on the turrets and the spires; where birds sing beside still ponds and flowers bloom; there dwells good Tantalus. May he live forever."

Then, at the height of his glory, Tantalus began to sin.

He hid a golden dog that a thief had stolen from the birthplace of Zeus in Crete. When Zeus asked for the dog, Tantalus swore that he had not seen it.

While dining with the gods on Olympus, he took ambrosia and nectar from the table and drank the foods that only the gods could have, and when he returned home he gave it out to men. This greatly angered the gods. For the food of immortals is not for man.

At last, Zeus called Tantalus to him at Olympus.

"What's come over you?" asked Zeus. "The gods have treated you more than well. Yet you betray our secrets. Our food you give to men, and you know that it's forbidden. Worse still, you lie. Do not deny that you have hidden the stolen dog. For I have seen into your heart and know."

Tantalus blushed.

"What you say is true," he replied. "All of it. I beg you to forgive me. If it were in my power, I would gladly undo what's been done. Since that is impossible, however, let me at least return your hospitality. Let the gods come and feast with me as I did with them. Then we can be friends again."

Zeus accepted this invitation on behalf of the gods, and Tantalus returned to his home.

In the days that followed, Tantalus felt his anger rise. His embarrassment before Zeus burned in him until he decided to get even. He did a terrible thing. Calling his servants, he had his own son, Pelops, killed and prepared as a special dish.

"Now let all-knowing Zeus save himself from unclean food!" he cried.

The day of the feast arrived. The gods in all their finery descended to the palace. There Tantalus had spread long tables

with choice foods and wines of every kind. Taking their places, the gods began to eat. Conversation was lively; appetites were keen. Merry voices and the clatter of dinnerware filled the room.

Then, with Zeus seated at the head of the table and passing the red wine round, Tantalus got up to speak.

"Gods of Olympus!" he cried. "Words cannot express the honor I feel in seeing you here. I, therefore, have prepared a dish of supreme delight, fit only for the likes of you. Please eat your fill."

Clapping his hands, he bid the servants bring the gruesome dish, though he himself served Zeus.

Taking up their silverware, the guests were about to eat when Zeus alone cried, "Hold! Do you not know that we've been served a dish of mortal flesh?"

The gods shrank back in horror from the plate.

Zeus sprang from his chair and knocked Tantalus to the floor. Then, calling for a large cauldron, he had the torn and broken limbs of the boy placed inside. Hermes brought forth the boy's soul from the land of the dead, rejoined it to the bones, and Pelops stepped from the cauldron whole and alive again.

Gods and mortals alike greeted Pelops with warmth and tears. When their greeting was done, however, a terrible hush fell over the room. Zeus turned to Tantalus.

"You, whom the gods have favored above all men, serve us now with treachery and the slaughter of your own son. Truly, vile greed has mastered your soul. We, therefore, cast you from us into Hades, there to thirst in agony for the splendor of these days and the gods who called you their friend."

Tantalus, seeing what he had done, cried out for mercy. But it was too late. Zeus killed him with a thunderbolt and Hermes dragged him to that world below where the ghosts of men wander.

There he was placed chin-deep in the cool waters of a pond. Boughs of lush fruit leaned down to him from every side. Still he could neither eat nor drink.

Each time he bent down to drink, the waters moved away from him, leaving bare ground. If he stretched out his hand for fruit, the boughs flew up beyond reach.

Last of all, Zeus placed a huge boulder above his head, held only by a rusty chain. And Tantalus, tortured by thirst and hunger, always fearful of being crushed, wept away the ages in that half-lit, haunted world among the living dead.

ATHENA AND ARACHNE

Ask your students: If someone were boasting, what might he say? After a few examples are given, ask particular students how they would feel if someone boasted, saying "I can (ride a bicycle) better than _____," or "I can (write) better than _____." Discuss students' reactions to such boasts.

Tell your students that Arachne boasts in today's story. Read Arachne's boast to your students: "I don't need the help of the gods. I can weave as well as Athena herself, who is the goddess of weaving."

Ask students how they think Athena would feel, how the gods who had given Arachne her great skill would feel, how Arachne's mother would feel when she, a god-fearing person, heard her daughter speak these words. Discuss students' responses.

Ask students what they think Athena, the gods, and Arachne's mother would do after they heard Arachne talk this way.

After students have discussed possibilities, ask them to listen to find out what did happen.

VOCABULARY

Arachne (ə răk′nē) - a young girl

neglect - not pay attention to; ignore

loom - the frame on which something is woven (perhaps you can bring a potholder loom or some other kind to show your students)

shuttle - a little tool used for weaving in the cross threads into cloth

rashness - not being cautious enough

defy - to challenge

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. What did Arachne's mother do after she heard Arachne boast? (Ran from the room sobbing with fright.)

2. What did Athena do after she heard Arachne boast? (Had a contest with Arachne; changed her into a spider.)

3. What powers did Athena have? (Could change her own form and change the form of a mortal.)

4. What warning did the old woman give Arachne? (That the gods punish those who challenge them.)

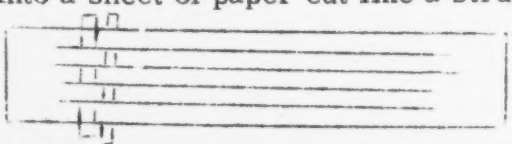
5. During the contest Athena wove pictures into her cloth. The pictures showed the anger of the gods at mortals who dared defy them. Whom do you think Athena wove into her cloth? (Prometheus for stealing fire from the gods; Sisyphus for outsmarting a number of gods; Tantalus for feeding his son to the gods; Arachne for boasting and challenging the gods.) How do you think Athena might have pictured each mortal? (Discuss. An art project could result.)

6. Into her cloth Arachne wove the mistakes the gods had made and the foolish things they had sometimes done. Do you think this was wise of her or not? (Discuss.)

7. What bit of nature does this story explain? (How the spider came to be.)

ACTIVITIES

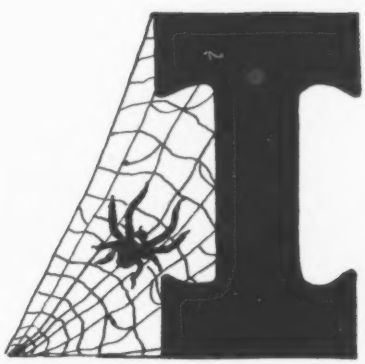
1. Supply students with strips of different colored paper that they can weave into a sheet of paper cut like a strung loom.



Or make ojos, which are Indian designs of yarn woven on crossed sticks. An art guide might contain full instructions.

If students have potholder looms at home, ask them to bring them to school. You might supply the loops of yarn so students could weave during their spare time in class.

ATHENA AND ARACHNE

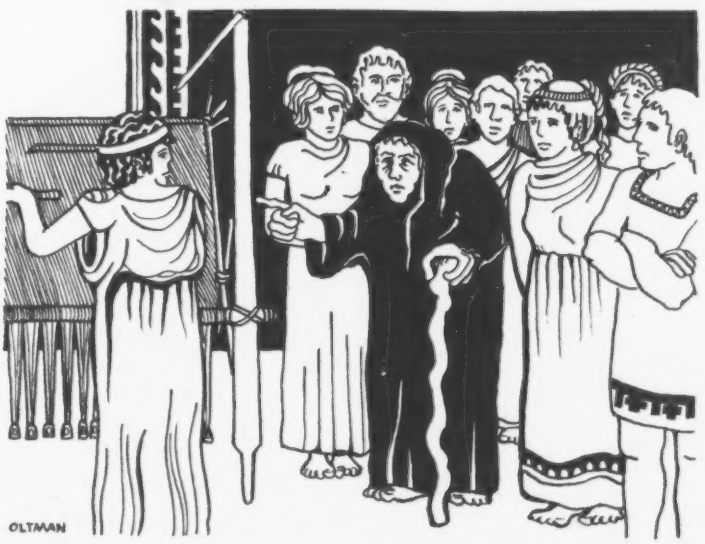


n a small village in the south of Greece lived a young girl named Arachne. Arachne was not beautiful. She couldn't sing or dance. She even neglected the household tasks she was given to do by her mother. But Arachne had one gift which people came from miles around to see. She could weave the most beautiful cloth on earth.

One day Arachne made a boast which upset her mother so much that she ran from the room sobbing with fright. The visitors clustered around Arachne's loom shook their heads sadly. "What I weave I've learned to weave by myself," the girl declared. "I don't need the help of the gods. I can weave as well as Athena herself, who is the goddess of weaving. Let her try her skill with mine!"

An old woman stepped out of the crowd around the loom. She was dressed in a long, black robe and was humped over a cane. The other visitors looked at her in surprise. Had she been there before, they asked each other.

The old woman raised her wrinkled face and spoke directly to Arachne. "Beware! The gods punish those who challenge them. All the skill you have is a gift of the gods. Remember that and ask Athena's forgiveness."



"I have no need of forgiveness," Arachne cried out. "Let Athena try her skill with mine. I'm not afraid of losing."

As soon as Arachne had spoken the room was filled with darkness. Then came a sudden flash of lightning. Where the old woman had been stood the tall and beautiful goddess Athena. On her shoulder perched an owl. In her hand was the thunderbolt of Zeus, for she was his favorite daughter. All but Arachne fell to their knees and bowed their heads before the goddess.

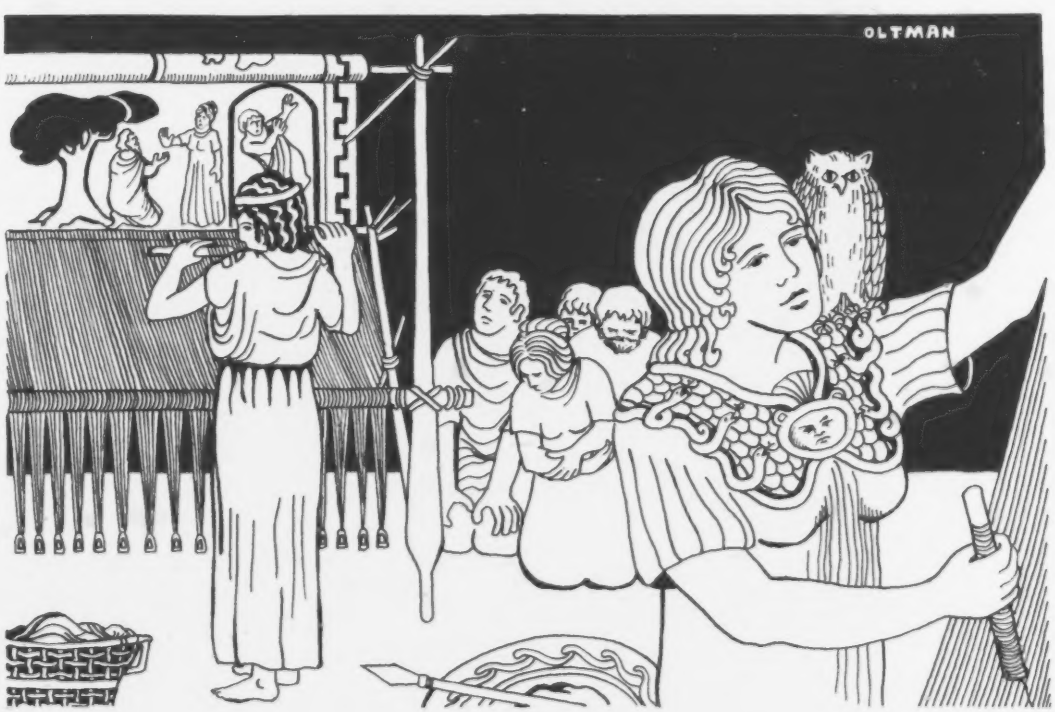
"Do you repent now, Arachne, of your foolish boast?" Athena demanded.

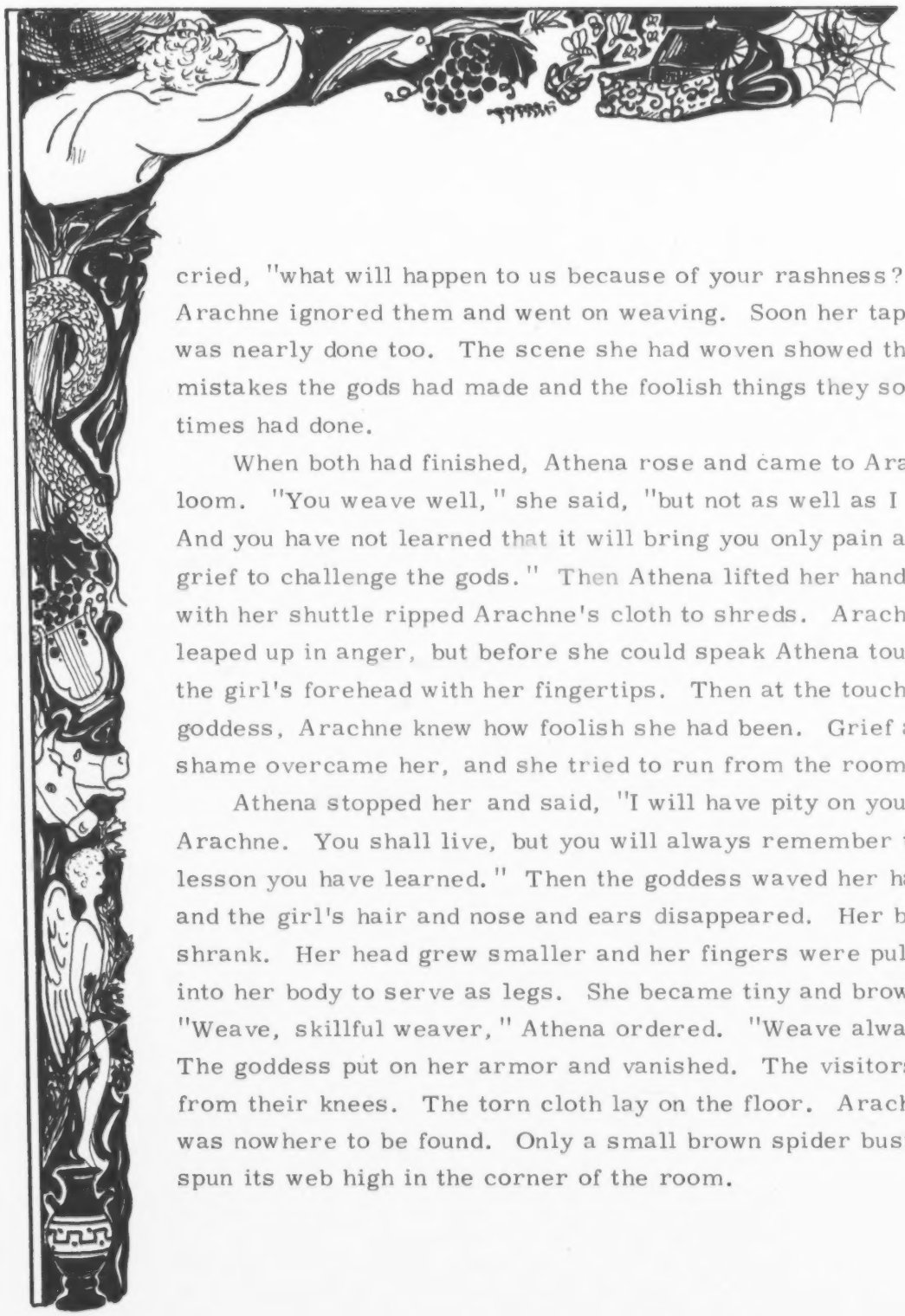
"Repent, Arachne!" the visitors cried out, trembling at Athena's feet.

"I will try my skill against yours," Arachne repeated, boldly standing beside her loom.

"Then weave your best," Athena said. Removing her armor, she sat down beside a loom, took a shuttle in her hand, and chose from the piles of rainbow-colored thread on the floor. She wove swiftly, singing softly as her weaving drew near an end. The pictures she wove into the cloth showed the anger of the gods with mortals who dared to defy them. The owl on her shoulder nodded his head wisely as her weaving grew. "Who?" he asked. "Who would dare to challenge your skill and wisdom?"

Arachne also wove rapidly on her own loom. The visitors were still kneeling on the floor, trembling. "Oh Arachne," they





cried, "what will happen to us because of your rashness?" Arachne ignored them and went on weaving. Soon her tapestry was nearly done too. The scene she had woven showed the mistakes the gods had made and the foolish things they sometimes had done.

When both had finished, Athena rose and came to Arachne's loom. "You weave well," she said, "but not as well as I do. And you have not learned that it will bring you only pain and grief to challenge the gods." Then Athena lifted her hand and with her shuttle ripped Arachne's cloth to shreds. Arachne leaped up in anger, but before she could speak Athena touched the girl's forehead with her fingertips. Then at the touch of the goddess, Arachne knew how foolish she had been. Grief and shame overcame her, and she tried to run from the room.

Athena stopped her and said, "I will have pity on you, Arachne. You shall live, but you will always remember the lesson you have learned." Then the goddess waved her hand, and the girl's hair and nose and ears disappeared. Her body shrank. Her head grew smaller and her fingers were pulled into her body to serve as legs. She became tiny and brown. "Weave, skillful weaver," Athena ordered. "Weave always!" The goddess put on her armor and vanished. The visitors rose from their knees. The torn cloth lay on the floor. Arachne was nowhere to be found. Only a small brown spider busily spun its web high in the corner of the room.

VENUS AND ADONIS

Ask your students what happened to Arachne in the last story because she didn't obey Athena's warning to ask forgiveness for her boasting. After you have discussed it awhile, tell your students that a young lad named Adonis receives a warning from Venus, goddess of love, that he doesn't obey. Ask them to listen to the story in order to find out what Venus's warning is and what happens to Adonis because he doesn't obey the warning.

VOCABULARY

Venus - goddess of love (the Romans' name for Aphrodite)

Cupid - son of Venus (the Romans' name for Eros)

Adonis (ə dŏn´əs) - a handsome young man

wild boar - a great wild pig with long tusks

memorial - a device for keeping the memory of someone alive

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Venus fall in love with Adonis? (Because she was accidentally wounded by one of Cupid's love arrows.)

2. What warning did Venus give Adonis? (To beware of dangerous animals; to hunt only safe ones.)

3. Did Adonis pay attention to Venus's warning? How can you tell? (No - he shoots at a wild boar.)

4. What happens to Adonis because he does not pay attention to Venus's warning? (He is gored by the wild boar and bleeds to death.)

5. What memorial does Venus make for the world to remember Adonis by? (She took the deep red of his blood and made it into a flower, the anemone.)

6. How is the wind flower, or the anemone, like Adonis? (It lives but a short time, as Adonis did; it is as red as his blood.)

7. Compare Venus's wound with Adonis's wound. (Discuss: Venus's wound was not so serious; Venus was wounded by mistake; Adonis's wound was much more serious; Adonis's wound came because he did not heed Venus's warning.)

8. How did Venus feel in the first part of the story? (Happy.) How did she feel in the last part of the story? (Sad.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Remind your students that this story begins happily and ends sadly. Suggest that you pick some god, one not used as the main character in any of the myths they have studied so far, and write a class story which moves not from happy to sad, but from sad to happy.

Write the first sentence on the board: "__(Hades)__ felt sad because _____"

Let students suggest ideas to fill in the second blank. Ask students to dictate to you as you write what they say on the board. Encourage refinements or voting among alternative suggestions.

When the story is finished, ask the class secretary to make a copy of it which students can illustrate, and write under each picture the particular phrase being illustrated.

Pin the story up on the board. Surround it with the illustrations and their phrases.

2. Ask your students to imagine what would happen if one of the gods--Hermes, for example--were wounded by a love arrow of Cupid and saw a skunk right after that, or perhaps he saw an apple tree.

Ask your students to pick one of the characters in Greek mythology and imagine that that character is shot with a love arrow. Then ask students to decide who the character first sets eyes on and to draw or paint a picture of a scene involving the new lovers.

If students want to share their pictures, they might tell about them in small groups. Each group could select one of their members to then tell about his story to the whole class.

3. Think about how the anemone came to be. Choose another flower and write an imaginary story about its origin or how it got its name, color, or fragrance.

VENUS AND ADONIS

One day, as Venus and her son Cupid were playing in the forest, Venus was accidentally wounded by one of Cupid's arrows of love. The first person that the love-struck goddess saw was the mortal lad Adonis. Venus at once fell deeply in love with him.

She forgot all about her former life of ease, when she was content to spend her days relaxing in the cool shade of the forest. She forgot her own beauty which used to be enough to keep her busy. Now she waited on Adonis. Since Adonis loved to hunt, Venus dressed herself like the great huntress Diana, and with her new love she roamed joyously through the forest seeking wild game.

Adonis enjoyed this new life with the Goddess of Love. Together they bounded swiftly through the woods, the hounds of Venus leading

them to their helpless prey. But one day Venus gave a warning to Adonis. "Beware of such dangerous animals as wolves and bears and wild boars. They are fierce and dangerous. Be content to hunt creatures that are safe to chase.

With her warning clearly given, Venus mounted her swan-drawn chariot and flew away to another part of the forest. No sooner had the flapping of those giant white wings died away than Adonis picked up his bow and quiver of arrows to do more hunting. The words of Venus were forgotten almost as soon as the chariot had disappeared.

As Adonis stepped into an open meadow, suddenly a wild boar, with great razor-sharp tusks, galloped across his path. As the hard hooves beat the ground before him, Adonis unleashed an arrow from the tight bow. The arrow struck the boar squarely, and the huge animal tumbled down on its side and lay still. Adonis, wild with pride in his victory over the beast, rushed over to claim the prize. But as he came near, the wild boar, which was only wounded, leaped to its feet and thrust a sharp tusk deep into the boy's side.

From high over the clouds, Venus heard the wounded boy's groan, and was alarmed. At once she turned her swans back to Earth.

There lay Adonis, bleeding from his deep wound. Venus, full of grief, held him in her arms. She knew he was going to die, but she vowed that Adonis would not be forgotten. "I shall make a memorial of his dying beauty that shall live forever," she said.

She took the deep red of his blood and made it into a flower. Although it lives but a short time, it comes alive every year with its beauty. The wind, which blows its petals open and later takes them away, has given the flower its name. It is called an Anemone, which means "wind flower."

ECHO AND NARCISSUS

Ask your students to echo what you say. Repeat the lines to this song. (Students may need some instructions on echoing at first.)

Hola (Hola - softly)
Oh what an echo (Oh what an echo)
Where are you where? (Etc.)
Come, echo.
Ha ha ha ha ha
Bold sounds of laughter.
You saucy echo
You mock us
And ridicule our singing.
Come then
Let's be still
If you please.

Tell your students that Echo used to be the name of the loveliest forest nymph in the Greek world. Today's story will explain how Echo's name came to mean an echo or soft repetition.

Bring to class a narcissus or a picture of one. Ask your students what kind of flower it is. Once they are familiar with the word narcissus, tell them Narcissus was the name of a handsome young man in the Greek world. Tell them today's story will explain how the young man's name came to be the name of the flower.

VOCABULARY

Narcissus - most handsome youth in the world

nymphs - (recall the creation story where the baby Zeus was given by his mother Rhea to the nymphs who raise him) beautiful maidens who live in streams or fields or forests

a curse - a causing of harm, usually in a magical way

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Hera angry with Echo? (Echo talked too much; Echo gave Hera away as Hera was searching for Zeus.)

2. How did Echo become an echo? (Hera put a curse on her. Echo could not speak until spoken to, and then she could only repeat what was said to her.)

3. Why did Echo disappear into only a thin sound? (She pined away for Narcissus.)

4. Do you think the curse Hera put on Echo was a fair one? Why or why not? (Discuss.)

5. If Echo had been able to speak to Narcissus, do you think Narcissus would have fallen in love with Echo? Why or why not? (Discuss.)

6. Who wanted to get revenge on Narcissus, and why? (One of his many girls he had refused. She wanted Narcissus to suffer as he had made others suffer.)

7. Who did Narcissus fall in love with? (Himself.)

8. Why did Narcissus become a graceful flower? (He wasted away gazing at himself in the pool.)

9. How do you feel about the gods' punishment of Narcissus? (Discuss.)

10. Compare the wasting away of Echo and the wasting away of Narcissus. (Discuss.)

ACTIVITIES

1. In this story are excellent scenes to act out--the scene between Hera and Echo; the scene between Echo and Narcissus; perhaps the scene where Narcissus looks into the pool and falls in love with himself. You might ask for volunteers to take turns acting out the three different scenes.

2. Flowers often look rather human. Read Alice Through the Looking Glass (Chapter 2, "The Garden of Live Flowers") to your students to get them interested in the idea of flowers being able to talk. Then ask them to pick any Greek god or goddess and imagine him or her as a flower. What color would the god or goddess be? What shape? What would the leaves be like? Would the flower be tall or short?

Give your students colored paper (scraps) and a complete sheet for a background (black or white or gray). Ask them to cut cut, fold, and paste to create their flower-gods.

Before students begin, show them how to make fold-out designs by pasting only part of their petal on the background after curling or folding outward the rest of the part.

Once students are done, ask them to write the name of the god or goddess below the flower in magic marker. Pin the flowers up on a bulletin board entitled "Garden of Greek Gods and Goddesses."

ECHO AND NARCISSUS

Long ago, deep in a forest of Greece, lived the most handsome lad in the world. His name was Narcissus, and every girl who saw him loved him. He was so handsome that girls chased helplessly after him, as if he were a magnet pulling at their hearts.

It was cruel because Narcissus would have nothing to do with them. Any other boy would have been pleased to have so many girls in love with him--but not proud Narcissus. He wanted to be left alone. He liked to think about himself a lot, because he thought he was the most interesting person he knew. Other people just got in the way--especially girls.

So, he was very good at running and hiding in the woods. Few of his followers ever caught him. If one did, it was all for nothing. He would rudely turn his back on her, refusing even to speak. The girl would stand there, her eyes begging for his love. But Narcissus paid no attention, and soon forgetting the unhappy girl, he took his love away with him, still locked in his cold, stone heart.

Not even the most beautiful girl in Greece could turn the stubborn head of Narcissus--not even the fairest of the forest Nymphs, Echo. Poor Echo, she had enough troubles without falling in love with selfish Narcissus.

Her troubles had started when she angered the powerful goddess Hera, wife of the king of gods, Zeus. Echo had the annoying habit of talking all the time. Daily her endless chatter broke the quiet of the forest. It was her wagging tongue that got her into trouble.

One day, Hera was hunting silently through the woods for Zeus. He had not been home for days and she wanted to know why. He had gone away before, but this time she had decided, "I will not wait for him. I will go down to Earth myself and find out what he is up to."

She moved without sound through the forest, being very careful not to warn Zeus with any noise. She knew he was nearby. But suddenly Echo saw her and called out loudly, "Hello, Hera! What brings you down here?"

Before she had time to answer, Zeus had vanished and at once flew back up to Mt. Olympus. He quickly sat down on his throne, as if he had never been gone.

Hera was furious with Echo. "Your mouth, loud girl, has ruined my plan and let my husband escape from me! You will pay for this." She placed a curse on Echo so that she could

not speak until she was spoken to--and then she could repeat only what was said to her. "That should keep you a little quieter," said Hera. "Quieter," repeated Echo, and that was all she could say.

When Echo fell in love with Narcissus, it was just one more misfortune for her. When she first saw him she was--of course--speechless. And Narcissus said nothing. As usual, he was busy thinking about himself.

But as Echo secretly watched him from behind a tree, a twig snapped under her foot. "Who goes there?" he called out. "There?" answered Echo. Narcissus was confused. "Where?" he asked. "Where?" she said. He looked all around. Then Echo stepped out from behind the tree, her arms held out to him. Narcissus quickly turned away. "Don't you know?" he said, "my love is for no one, not even for one as beautiful as you. Go away!" he ordered. "Away!" she repeated, and Narcissus turned and ran off through the woods.

Echo was broken-hearted. She fell to the ground, weeping silently. Alone with her grief, she became thinner and thinner, until finally she wasted away entirely. Nothing is left of her now but her voice, which still answers those who call to her.

But what about Narcissus? He soon forgot the sad girl, for he had himself to think about. That took up all his time. But there was someone who could not forget <u>him</u>--one of the many girls he had refused. She was angry as well as hurt, and so she prayed to the gods for revenge. She asked that Narcissus would suffer as he had made others suffer--that he would fall in love with someone who would not return his love.

The gods granted the angry girl's wish. They caused Narcissus to come upon a clear pool of water one day, a pool still and clear like a watery mirror. As he started to walk past it, he stopped suddenly. Something in the pool caught his attention. Looking out at him from the pool was the most beautiful face he had ever seen. For the first time in his life he fell hopelessly in love.

He knelt down for a closer look; the face came closer to him. He was captured by his own beauty. He fell so in love with the face in the pool that he could do nothing else but gaze at it.

Finally, like the girls who had died starving for his love, Narcissus himself wasted away. Finally he turned into a graceful flower, which often grows beside pools of water, where it can look at its own image day after day. We call the flower the narcissus.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Write the words Orpheus and Eurydice on the board, pronounce them, and explain who they are. Have your students pronounce them over and over again, because these are difficult names that need to be said and heard a lot.

Next pass out dittoed copies of the picture included with this lesson. Ask students which person they think is Eurydice and which Orpheus. Have students write the names under the proper pictures.

Continue naming and explaining each character in the picture; write the names of the characters under the appropriate pictures. (See vocabulary page.)

Tell your students that today's story is about the two mortals, Orpheus and Eurydice.

Read the first part, finishing with the sentence: "His torch smoked and brought tears to the lovers' eyes."

Ask your students what bad things might happen. After a few ideas, continue reading part two in order to find out what evil thing does happen. Finish with the sentence: "If you look back before you are in the upper world, you will lose her forever, and she will return to my kingdom."

Remind your students that this is another warning a god gives to a mortal. Ask them when else a god or goddess warned a mortal. (Athena warned Arachne; Venus warned Adonis.) Ask your students if either time the mortal obeyed the god. (No.) Ask students if they think this time it will be different and Orpheus will obey Hades. Discuss their ideas.

VOCABULARY

Orpheus (ôr´ fē əs) - a young man, a fine musician

Eurydice (yū rĭd´ ə sē) - the wife of Orpheus

Pan - a god who is half man and half goat

lyre - a harp-like instrument

mortal - a person (who dies). (Compare with immortal - a god who never dies.

Hymen - the god of weddings

evil omens - signs of bad things to come

Acheron (ăk´ər on) - a river of woe in the Underworld

Charon (kă rən) - the boatman who took the souls of the dead across the river to the gates of the Underworld.

Cerberus (ser´ber əs) - the terrible three-headed dog who guarded the gates of the Underworld.

READ THE SELECTION

QUESTIONS

1. What happened when Orpheus played his lyre on Earth? What happened to the waves? (They calmed down.) To lovers? (They stopped quarreling.) To children? (They stopped crying.) To mothers? (They stopped scolding.) To animals? (They came out of hiding and listened with trust.)

2. Why did Orpheus fall in love with Eurydice? (She sang to him.)

3. What evil thing happened at the wedding? (Eurydice was killed by the bite of a snake.)

4. What did Orpheus decide to do? (Take Eurydice away from Hades and the Underworld.)

5. Why were the guests afraid of Orpheus's plan? (No living man had ever gone to the Underworld before.)

6. What power did Orpheus's music have on his journey? Power over the earth? (It opened up for him.) Over Cerberus, the three-headed dog? (He stopped his fierce barking and let Orpheus pass.) Over Hades and Persephone? (They allowed Eurydice to go back to the upper world.)

7. Do you think the story ends sadly or happily? Why? (Discuss.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Look over the pictures on the ditto, asking students to explain how each character fits into today's story. Then let students color in the pictures.

2. Think of some songs you like to listen to or sing. What kind of music do you like best? Why do you like it? How does it make you feel?

Write a paragraph telling about your favorite music.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

usic, like everything else on earth, came from the gods. The god Pan, half man and half goat, bewitched the forests with the melodies from his flute. Apollo's lyre soothed the gods and goddesses, lulling them to sleep, but even these great musicians put aside their instruments when Orpheus drew song from his lyre.

The waves calmed as he played. Lovers stopped their quarrels and listened with joy. Children forgot to cry; mothers forgot to scold. The animals came out of their hiding places and listened with trust to this mortal who touched their hearts with song rather than with arrows.

No one, mortal or immortal, could resist the music of Orpheus. Many young girls wanted Orpheus for a husband, and wove wreaths for his hair and brought him cool drinks and fruit.

But one maiden brought him song, and as she sang his heart went out to the singer and became hers. Her name was Eurydice, the most beautiful and loving of all the young women.

The date for the wedding was set. Plans were made for song and dance and great tables of food to serve the many guests. Hymen himself, the god of weddings, had been called to bless Orpheus and Eurydice.

The wedding took place in a beautiful meadow, and the guests happily ate and danced and sang. But when Hymen finally appeared, he brought only evil omens. His torch smoked and brought tears to the lovers' eyes.

Soon, however, the evil signs were forgotten, and everyone was laughing and talking again.

As Eurydice walked among her guests in the meadow, suddenly she stepped on a poisonous snake, which bit her. Within minutes she had died from the poison. The guests were shocked, and Orpheus wept bitterly. The evil omens had come true.

Orpheus, taking up his lyre, said before all his guests, "I will bring her back. I will journey to the land of the dead and claim my bride. I will take her away from Hades, the god of the Underworld." The wedding guests looked at him in fear. No living man had ever dared to make this terrible journey.

Orpheus played sadly on his lyre, begging the earth to open so that he could begin his awful journey. "Eurydice," he wept, "Eurydice, my beloved, I must find you." His song drew forth an answer from the trembling earth, which opened a path for him. Playing his lyre and singing sadly, Orpheus followed the path. He went deeper and deeper into the earth.

Finally, at the end of the dark path he came to a river called Acheron, the River of Woe. On its shores waited the ghostly Charon, the boatman who ferried the souls of the dead across the river to the gates of the Underworld. Although he was frightened, Orpheus kept on singing of his love for the dead Eurydice. Charon moaned as the music moved around him. With a bony hand he beckoned Orpheus into the boat and slowly they moved across the dark river. As they reached the other shore Orpheus continued his song and Cerebus, the terrible three-headed dog who guarded the gates, stopped his fierce barking and lifted his ears to hear the song.

Playing softly upon his lyre Orpheus moved past Cerebus and went into the kingdom of the dead. Before him rose the great, black throne of Hades and his bride, Persephone. He knelt before them and sang, "Mighty rulers, I beg of you, return my love. She is young and needs the upper world of sun and wind. Your world of shadows and darkness does not need her. I beg of you, give me back my bride."

Then Persephone put her hand on her husband's arm. "My lord," she said, "let him have his bride back."

Hades was moved by Orpheus' song. "Very well," he said. "You may have her, Orpheus, but there is one thing you must not do. She will follow behind you, but you must not look back to see if she is there. If you look back before you are in the upper world, you will lose her forever, and she will return to my kingdom."

Then Orpheus played a song of great joy. Still playing, he moved through the great gates, past Cerebus, the great dog, and got into Charon's boat. The journey across the river of woe seemed short as he thought of his happiness. He climbed up and up through the darkness, singing all the way, and the roots of the trees whispered their happiness at Eurydice's return. When Orpheus finally saw the light near the top of the path, he cried out, "Eurydice, Eurydice, are you really with me at last?" He turned and looked back. He had forgotten Hades' warning. Eurydice gave a sad cry and reached her arms towards him. But at once she began to fade, and in a moment had vanished.

Orpheus cried out in vain to her. She had returned to the Underworld.

Sadly, Orpheus returned to the world above. He played only sad songs now. He left the village and went up into the hills, where he played songs of his love to the wild beasts. After a while he died, and his spirit joined Eurydice's in the Underworld. In memory of him, Zeus placed his lyre where it can still be seen on a dark summer night among the stars.